

**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**



00013729128





















---

LIFE IN THE LAITY.

---





cl 34

# LIFE IN THE LAITY;

OR,

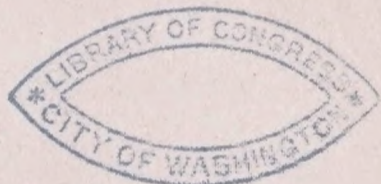
## THE HISTORY OF A STATION.

BY REV. L. D. DAVIS,

AUTHOR OF "LIFE IN THE ITINERANCY."



New-York:



PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR

BY CARLTON & PORTER, 200 MULBERRY-STREET.

1858.

PZ<sup>3</sup>  
□ 2947 Li

---

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1858, by  
**L. D. DAVIS,**  
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Southern  
District of New-York.

---

06 - 32474



## INTRODUCTION.

---

THE writer of this volume, on a former occasion, attempted a delineation of pastoral life in the itinerant ministry, and sought to show the practical workings of that system in relation to those who fill the sacred office. It is his effort in these pages to illustrate the influence of the same system on the laity of the Church. He also hopes to aid in correcting such evils as may be found to exist, most of which, as he humbly be-

lieves, may be easily removed by the united efforts of the pastors and their people.

On both occasions the narrative form has been adopted as better calculated to secure the result. The characters drawn are believed, without a single exception, to have their counterpart in real life. Indeed many of them may be found in every Church, though a wider range than any single congregation must be taken to include them all.

As in "Life in the Itinerancy" some persons within the author's acquaintance have considered themselves personally referred to, it is anticipated that similar complaints may arise in regard to "Life



in the Laity.” If so, let such be assured that nothing of the kind is intended. If the reader finds the description appropriate and is inclined to make the application to himself, he is at liberty to do so at his pleasure, and it is to be hoped to his profit.

It may be thought by some that the delineation is too much confined to the wrongs that are found existing among us. It is true that these have a prominent place in the narrative, from the fact that it is to their removal the volume aims. The majority of the laity are true to the interests of religion and the Church, and such is the representation here given. But there is almost every-

where a restless minority, a class of small-minded persons, who contrive in public, as in these pages, to occupy positions of greatest notoriety, and who not unfrequently bring contempt on the institutions of the Gospel. Whether we desire it or not, these thrust themselves on our attention at all times and on all occasions.

Thankful for the favorable reception which has been given to his former work, the author submits these pages with the encouraging hope that their influence for good will not be altogether in vain.



# CONTENTS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

THE VILLAGE OF BERLIN — A REVIVAL — REV. MR. BLISS —  
OPPOSITION — THE CONVERTS — JOSEPH AMES — NEW ASSO-  
CIATIONS — THE STATION..... PAGE 13

## CHAPTER II.

TESTS OF CHARACTER — AN INCONSISTENCY — ITS INFLU-  
ENCE — A CHANGE OF PASTORS — THE ITINERANCY —  
BACKSLIDINGS..... 22

## CHAPTER III.

A NEW STAND-POINT — THE BOARD OF STEWARDS — MR. VER-  
NON — MR. GRAY — FATHER WELLS — MR. PUTNAM AND  
OTHERS..... 35

## CHAPTER IV.

REV. MR. OLEY — ONE-IDEA MEN — DISAFFECTION — SPEAK-  
ING EVIL OF THE CHURCH — AN ENCOURAGEMENT..... 40

## CHAPTER V.

|                                                                                                                                      |         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| THE APPROACHING CONFERENCE — NOVELTY — DISCUSSION OF<br>MINISTERIAL CHARACTER — A MISTAKE — FAREWELL TOKEN<br>— MUTUAL PLEASURE..... | PAGE 49 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|

## CHAPTER VI.

|                                                                                                                       |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| THE PREACHER'S SALARY — RAISING A DEFICIENCY — EX-<br>CUSES — SCHOOL FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN NATURE —<br>LESSONS ..... | 55 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CHAPTER VII.

|                                                                                             |    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| REV. MR. WILSON — FIRST IMPRESSIONS — VARIETY OF OPIN-<br>IONS — A DECLENSION — REMEDY..... | 66 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CHAPTER VIII.

|                                                                                                                                                          |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| LOSS AND GAIN — A REACTION — REPAIRING THE PARSONAGE<br>— SELF-DENIAL OF THE FATHERS — FURNITURE — THE<br>FESTIVAL — RENEWED PROSPERITY — ITS CAUSE..... | 78 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CHAPTER IX.

|                                                                                                                                                    |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| PETITIONING FOR A PREACHER — CONTENDING FOR A PRINCIPLE —<br>DIVERSITY OF OPINION — REV. MR. DUNN — A LOBBY<br>MEMBER AT CONFERENCE — SUCCESS..... | 87 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|



## CHAPTER X.

THE FIRST QUARTERLY CONFERENCE — MAKING AN “ALLOW-  
 ANCE” — A STRIKE — DISCUSSION — THE SALARY RAISED  
 — THE DONATION VISIT — A MISTAKE CORRECTED..PAGE 95

## CHAPTER XI.

PLEADING POVERTY — PUNISHING THE PREACHER — MEAN-  
 NESS — ITS INFLUENCE..... 110

## CHAPTER XII.

BROTHER GRAY AT CONFERENCE — REV. MR. SPENCER —  
 A CHEAP PREACHER PROCURED — THE LOAVES AND  
 FISHES..... 118

## CHAPTER XIII.

SICKNESS AND DEATH OF BROTHER VERNON — HIS CHARACTER  
 AND INFLUENCE — THE LOSS..... 127

## CHAPTER XIV.

DISCOURAGEMENTS — GOING ABROAD TO WORSHIP — REV. MR.  
 NELSON — REDUCING THE SALARY ON A NEW PRINCIPLE  
 — A CHEAP GOSPEL — RENTING PEWS SO AS TO MAKE  
 MONEY..... 132

## CHAPTER XV.

CHARITY BEGINNING AT HOME — TAKING BREATH — THE  
BIBLE AGENT — SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION — THE MISSIONARY  
COLLECTION — A CENT A WEEK FOR THE CONVERSION OF  
THE WORLD — MR. TITUS — FIFTH COLLECTION — BROTHER  
QUIGLEY AND HIS TWO SHILLINGS.....PAGE 147

## CHAPTER XVI.

CHANGES IN THE OFFICIAL BOARD — DOING WITHOUT A  
PREACHER — BROTHER BURNS — A CHURCH DOLLAR — REV.  
MR. TOWNLEY — CHURCH REPAIRS..... 162

## CHAPTER XVII.

UNEXPECTED CHANGE OF PASTORS — SHORT TERMS — THEIR  
INFLUENCE — REV. MR. GOLDEN — CALLING ON THE PREACH-  
ER'S WIFE..... 175

## CHAPTER XVIII.

PASTORAL VISITING — BROTHER BENTON — SISTER QUIGLEY  
— A GREAT REVIVAL AND ITS FRUITS — REMOVAL OF THE  
PASTOR..... 185

## CHAPTER XIX.

RESULTS OF THE REVIVAL — REVIEW — ATTAINMENTS —  
CONCLUSION..... 195



# LIFE IN THE LAITY.

---

## CHAPTER I.

THE VILLAGE OF BERLIN — A REVIVAL — REV. MR. BLISS —  
OPPOSITION — THE CONVERTS — JOSEPH AMES — NEW ASSO-  
CIATIONS — THE STATION.

THE village of Berlin had been for several months the theater of an intense excitement. It was usually a quiet little town, situated at the foot of an inland lake, with a high range of hills stretching away to the south and west, and possessing a variety of rural attractions which had rendered it somewhat famous. The general intelligence and staid morality of its inhabitants were also of a character to command universal respect. The farmers for many

miles around were accustomed to transact their business here; and when the toils and labors of the week were ended, many of them came with equal zeal to spend the Christian Sabbath in the public worship of Almighty God. Though containing not more than two thousand inhabitants, each of the leading denominations of the country was represented by a church and congregation, which were, in the main, properly conducted and well sustained.

At the time of which we write there was in progress a widely-extended revival of religion. So powerful was its influence that all classes of society were more or less affected. The religious and irreligious seemed almost equally concerned in what was taking place. Large numbers who had heretofore stood aloof from the Church, were now crowding to her sacred altars; not a few of whom were already rejoicing in the assurance that they had passed from death unto life. Almost every day wit-



nessed additional triumphs of grace in the awakening and conversion of souls.

The revival, and scenes connected with it, constituted the almost universal theme of conversation. The devout Christian, who exulted in the prosperity of the Church, pointed with grateful emotions to the tokens of Divine favor with which the people were blessed. The skeptic looked upon all this increased interest, and these unusual efforts, as the outgoings of sheer fanaticism, and was not only filled with anger by what he saw and heard, but was fully aroused in his opposition. He saw in the influence exerted a power which was sweeping away his refuge, and undermining the foundation on which he had fancied himself secure. Even those who had been heretofore indifferent were aroused, some joining themselves to one party and some to the other.

The preacher, Rev. Mr. Bliss, was well calculated for such an occasion. He was a

man in middle life; and it was chiefly through his instrumentality that the work had been promoted. It is true, other denominations had now entered the field, and other clergymen had become efficient co-laborers in the good work. Still, Mr. Bliss was recognized by all parties as the leader, under God, of the marshaled host who were so successfully making war on the kingdom of Satan. With the converts he was an especial favorite. They saw in him the instrument of their salvation, and blessed God that he had ever come among them. The Church also loved him as a pastor, and followed his counsels, as they were found to be in harmony with the Divine word.

To the enemies of the Church Mr. Bliss was particularly obnoxious; not because of his errors, real or supposed, but of his success. This class of persons looked upon every newly-converted soul as a trophy taken from their ranks, and viewed the



change as discrediting their course of life. As a means of self-defense, rather than from any other motive, they entered the arena as opponents of the revival, and succeeded, not so much in hindering it as in hardening their own hearts, and blinding their own eyes with the denser mists of skepticism and doubt.

Among those who had been recently converted, to whom the reader should be introduced, was Mr. Joseph Ames, a young business man of fine talents, and a general favorite in society. Though heretofore an attendant at church, and maintaining a respectful deportment toward the institutions of religion, he had never until now given its claims any serious attention. Since his conversion he had been exceedingly active, and had exerted a commanding influence. As if to make up for past deficiencies, all his energies were devoted to his Master's service. With him was his friend and companion, William



Holmes, who had undergone a similar change, and who was equally zealous in behalf of the cause they had embraced. These, with others, had become members of the Church, and gave promise, to all who knew them, of extensive usefulness.

By this change in their views and feelings, both Ames and Holmes were brought into relations entirely new. Such of their old companions as were still unconverted withdrew their friendship, and treated them with comparative coolness, rather shunning than courting their society. Associations long kept up were broken off by a kind of mutual consent, and our young friends were left to the enjoyment of that higher type of friendship which is found only in the fellowship of the saints.

For the loss of their old companions they were more than compensated in being permitted to mingle with the kindred spirits that now surrounded them. They were both surprised and strengthened by the cor-



diality with which they were greeted in their new relation. Such was the flow of Christian feeling, that the various members of the Church seemed of one heart and one mind. A single impulse nerved their energies, and a strong, mysterious, yet glorious tie bound them in the bands of brotherhood and constituted them inmates of the household of faith. They saw, as they had never done before, the influence of the Gospel in bringing aliens and strangers together, and making them one in Christ Jesus the Lord. The aged and the youth met on a common platform, the rich and the poor bowed at the same shrine, and the blessing of God rested upon them all. With such associations, they could not fail to be delighted.

Among the older members whose acquaintance should be formed, were Mr. Vernon, Mr. Bissell, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Titus, and Mr. Howe, who were the class-leaders. These brethren had been long in the service of the Church, and, with perhaps a single excep-



tion, were highly esteemed. Mr. Oliver was a local preacher of talent and influence, and an efficient co-laborer with the preacher in charge. In these respects he was the very opposite of Mr. Burns, another local preacher of several years' standing. There was but a single exhorter, Mr. Ely, who, though a good man, was quite illiterate, and but poorly adapted to the congregations he sometimes attempted to serve.

There was also a large number of godly women, who labored in word and spirit, and who were among the most efficient members of society. The Church at Berlin knew nothing of that fastidiousness which would exclude the sisters from the social services of religion ; and in both class and prayer-meetings they were generally active. To them this branch of Zion was greatly indebted for its present prosperity.

Including the number recently received, the Berlin station contained about two hundred and fifty members. Of these a few



were rich, possessing an abundance of this world's goods ; and a few were poor, living in penury and want ; but the greater part belonged to what is known as the middle classes, not abounding in riches, and not especially suffering from their absence. It was, on the whole, a good charge ; though not without such evils as are incident to all similar organizations, and not free from the imperfections to which fallen humanity is ever subject.

## CHAPTER II.

TESTS OF CHARACTER—AN INCONSISTENCY—ITS INFLUENCE—A CHANGE OF PASTORS—THE ITINERANCY—BACKSLIDINGS.

EVERY season of revival in the Church is followed by a temporary reaction. This seems in a measure necessary for the trial of the faith and the more rapid growth of the virtues of such as have been recently converted. In this life most men are so slow to learn, that they need to be schooled in adversity as well as prosperity. There is also a demand that the chaff should be separated from the wheat; and this cannot well be done without the application of tests that shall discover the character of each.

Thus at Berlin, the protracted meeting had scarcely closed when some, who had run well for a season, went back and walked



with the disciples no more. A few of the older Christians, also, who had been quite zealous during the revival, settled into a state of inglorious ease, and began to act as though the work which had been given them to do was fully accomplished. The number of such, however, was comparatively small; but the converts observed that they were those who, during the revival, had been most severe in denouncing the unfaithfulness of Christians, and upbraiding the Church for its past delinquencies. These persons seemed to look upon religious duties as highly important, and to be attended to in their season; and as the season was now past, they could turn their attention to secular things, and leave the Church to care for its own interests.

The influence of this class was especially deleterious. With them religion was an abstraction, and had little or nothing to do with a man's life outside the house of wor-

ship, further than in the preservation of a tolerable morality. Mr. Ames, who took a comprehensive view of things, discovered, almost instantly, the absurdity of the professions which these persons had made. To him, young as he was in the Christian life, it was an enigma difficult to be solved. He believed them sincere, and yet felt the inconsistency of their position. Every defec-tion of this character produced a kind of moral shock, which tended to weaken his energies and cripple his faith. Had it not been for noble examples of the opposite character, he would doubtless have yielded to the current of temptation and been carried down the stream, until his soul was overwhelmed by the flood and involved in ruin.

Between himself and his friend Holmes there were long conversations on this subject. In the end the right conclusion was reached. They saw in the delinquents before them persons of impulsive tempera-



ments, who, under the influence of excitement, would go beyond their level and become happy, and confound that emotional flow of spirits with the idea of practical piety. To them this was pure and undefiled religion; and when the circumstances that fanned the flame ceased to exist, the flame itself went out, leaving the smothered embers to shoot forth at some future time with the same intensity as before. Doubtless, said they, these brethren will again be as active as ever. They mean well, and, through the mercy of God, may be saved at last.

For this trial the converts were not all equally prepared. Indeed there were but few that, without experience, could make the requisite apology. On such minds the result was more unfavorable than at first might be supposed. Some, seeing the example and supposing it safe to follow, settled into a similar apathy; while others had their confidence in Christian professions so



entirely shaken as to result in their total apostasy.

The converts soon found another trial that they looked upon as equally serious. They were, without exception, strongly attached to their minister. Mr. Bliss had won them to Christ and instructed them in the great primary truths of religion. He was an able preacher, successful not only in leading sinners to the cross, but also in carrying them forward to the higher attainments of the Christian life. By his deep piety he had secured the affection of those around him, and had it in his power to mold them after the pattern of the Gospel, as could be done by no other hand. But the conference was soon to hold its session. It was his second year on the station, and he must close up his labors and remove from the scenes in which he had been so signally triumphant. Those whom he had brought into the Church were yet on probation, and could not be received into full connection during his



stay. Many of them felt their destiny linked with his, and looked gloomily forward to the day of separation.

To those not intimately acquainted with the itinerant system, it appeared highly improper that a change should be demanded. The most intelligent converts were of this class.

"Why may not Brother Bliss remain with us," said Mr. Ames to Brother Vernon, his class-leader. "Is there no possibility of retaining him?"

"The rule is imperative," was the reply. "No preacher can stay but two years in a place."

"I am sure it will never seem like home again," said the young convert. "I don't understand the reason for such a rule, and can't think it proper."

"It does seem hard," was the old gentleman's reply. "When we have a man that we like, it would be pleasant to keep him; but the rule is not altogether arbitrary."

There are some substantial reasons on which it is based."

"I can see no *good* reason why Brother Bliss should be taken from us."

"Nor I either, so far as this case is concerned, and we alone are interested. But this is not all. We are a connectional people. Our whole plan is formed on the principle of mutual sacrifices for the common good. The itinerancy has an adaptation to the wants of the world possessed by no other system, and it can be kept up only by frequent and uniform changes. There are many cases which require no small sacrifice, and ours is one of them; and yet we should submit for the success of the whole."

"But it seems too bad to have Brother Bliss sent away in the midst of his usefulness. I believe he can do more good here than at any other place," persisted Mr. Ames.

"I have no doubt of that myself. To every general rule there are exceptions;



but it will not do to legislate for them, discarding the principle involved. Besides, we do not change, on the average, much oftener than the other denominations."

"I am aware of that; but they change when there is a *reason* for it. I believe in changes when they are called for."

"Well, Brother Ames, let us consider this in another light. Changes will occur, and is it not the better way to have them do so in accordance with some general rule? In a settled ministry almost every change is a reflection on either the minister or his people. It implies difficulty, and seldom fails to engender contention and strife. Parties will be formed for and against every proposition of this kind, and disaffection will ensue, let the decision be as it may."

"I have seen something of this in our own village; but how is this to be remedied?"

"It cannot occur with us, while we maintain our rule. We never send a man away, or force him to resign. Nobody is dis-

credited; all is provided for, and generally all is satisfactory."

"Still I can't look upon it as right that the people should have nothing to say in the selection of their pastors," said Mr. Ames, rather changing the point. "I am in favor of the itinerancy, but I think the laity should have a voice in this matter."

"Let us see," replied Mr. Vernon, "what sort of an itinerancy we should have with the people calling and settling their ministers. In the first place we should have to grant the preachers the same right to select their places."

"Yes, I suppose we should."

"And you would have them remain as long as both parties were satisfied, would you not?"

"As a general thing I would?"

Mr. Vernon smiled, and asked again: "Then where would our itinerancy differ from a so-called settled ministry? Every preacher would negotiate for his place, and



every Church bargain for its pastor, and there would be—”

“I see my mistake,” interrupted Mr. Ames; “you have driven me to this dilemma: either we must have the itinerancy, with its present or similar regulations, or not have it at all.”

“Exactly,” responded Mr. Vernon.

“Well, I cannot feel *satisfied* to part with Brother Bliss at any rate. I suppose we must, however.”

It is not surprising that Mr. Ames, and others similarly situated, should view the subject in this light. Unacquainted with the history of the itinerancy, and having no just conception of its achievements in the past, and finding, on their introduction to it, exactions of the most self-denying and cross-bearing character, they might well shrink back and utter a voice of complaint. Such was the disaffection of Mr. Holmes, that he declared he would leave and go to the Congregationalists as soon as Mr. Bliss was re-



moved. He could not brook the idea of a stranger in the place of one so fondly loved. Further reflection led him to a different conclusion. He believed the doctrines of the Church of his choice, and was possessed of too much principle to subscribe to an opposite creed.

Not so with all. Several were induced to go away, preferring permanence, in less agreeable associations, to constant change in the society where they were converted. This was the case with Mr. Crosby and family, together with a number of the young people who belonged to what might be technically described as "the first families."

Still others, as Mr. Bliss was taken from them, sunk into a religious apathy from which it was impossible to arouse them. Nearly all stood ready to look upon the new minister with a jealous eye, as though an intruder were coming among them. This feeling was not confined to the members



who had recently joined; it existed in a greater or less degree among all classes, though it was generally kept in subjection to the authority which prompted the change.

The conference met, and Mr. Bliss was sent away a distance of fifty miles. In his place came Rev. Mr. Oley, an excellent man and a good preacher. He manifested an ardent desire to meet the wants of the charge, and at once entered zealously into the work. Being an entire stranger, he could not mark the changes that were taking place, and, of course, lost the opportunity which he might have otherwise had of reclaiming the wandering and encouraging those that hesitated to go forward in the way of life.

A few became thus entangled again in the yoke of bondage, and went back to the world. These, added to those who were induced to join other Churches, reduced full one half the number which it was at first

expected would be received into Church fellowship. But with all these defections the revival was an invaluable blessing. To the Berlin Station it was the beginning of better days, and the dawning of a higher prosperity than had been heretofore enjoyed. In far less time than had been expected, Mr. Oley secured the affections of his people, and was loved as ardently as was his predecessor. Not that there was a transfer of regard from one to the other, by which the new minister displaced the old one, but rather that the hearts of the people were sufficiently capacious to give each a place.



## CHAPTER III.

A NEW STAND-POINT.—THE BOARD OF STEWARDS—MR. VERNON—MR. GRAY—FATHER WELLS—MR. PUTNAM AND OTHERS.

MR. AMES had been a member in full connection but a few months when he was appointed to the important and responsible office of steward. His sound judgment, undoubted piety, and correct business habits, abundantly fitted him for this position, though he entered upon it with no inconsiderable misgiving. About the same time his friend Holmes was elected one of the trustees of the church. They were thus brought into relations where they could become intimately acquainted with the affairs of the society, and judge of the itinerancy by observing its practical operations and marking the influence which it constantly exerted.

They soon discovered that the polity of the Church was entirely peculiar. Heretofore they had looked upon certain points alone, and formed their opinion without having understood the reasons upon which they were based. They now saw that the system must be studied as a unit, that the powers and prerogatives conferred must be considered with reference to the guards and limitations enjoined. The exactions made of one party were found to be balanced by those required of another. They saw in the plan a general surrender of private and selfish interests for the promotion of the public good.

Occupying a stand-point where they could thus look over the whole ground, and entering thoroughly into the investigation, our friends found the Church invested with additional interest. As an aggressive power, its adaptation seemed complete. Its agencies for defense were also of the highest order, calling into requisition the



undivided energies of even its humblest members.

Mr. Ames found in the board of stewards men of widely different characteristics. To each of them the reader shall have an introduction. Mr. Vernon was the oldest and most influential member. He was a man of considerable wealth, a quiet and unassuming personage, in whose piety all who knew him had the utmost confidence. Mr. Gray was the richest man in the Church. He had begun poor, and worked his way along to his present position by close application to business and untiring energy in the execution of all his plans. Reputation charged him with being exceedingly selfish, having an eye first of all to his own interests, which were to be promoted at all hazards. He was well versed in money matters, but lacked that general intelligence which can alone give enlarged views and promote an expansive benevolence. Mr. Toby was a man of limited means, but

thoroughly active in all departments. As a man and a Christian, the Berlin Station possessed no member who was his superior. Father Wells, as he was familiarly called on account of his age, was the representative of old times; at least, such was his claim, and it was not often disputed. His temporalities were in a good condition, though, in the world's parlance, he could not be accounted rich. Mr. Benton was reputed very zealous. Every camp-meeting abroad and every extra meeting at home testified to his activity. His professions were of the highest order, and his fearlessness in reproofing his brethren, by exposing their sins, knew no bounds. By many it was thought, however, that his Christianity was a little soured, and that he sometimes mistook his will for his conscience. The only remaining member, Mr. Putnam, was a man that it would be difficult to describe. He seemed to have no strong point on which the attention could be fixed, and took no decided



part in the deliberations of the board. He would be best represented in the scale of numerals by a cipher standing solitary and alone. How he came to be appointed nobody knew, and why he was retained it was equally difficult to tell. Beyond occasionally passing the plate for a collection, he had never been known to act in promoting the temporalities of the Church.

On the whole, this was a good board of stewards, fully equal to the average of the conference. That it might have been improved there is no doubt; and it was generally thought that Mr. Ames was an acquisition that would be highly beneficial.

To these men were committed the financial interests of the station. On them, more than upon any others, depended the permanent success of the Church. The itinerancy cannot succeed without competent stewards, who will look after its details and supply the demands made upon the department committed to their care.

## CHAPTER IV.

REV. MR. OLEY — ONE-IDEA MEN — DISAFFECTION — SPEAK-  
ING EVIL OF THE CHURCH — AN ENCOURAGEMENT.

MR. OLEY remained at Berlin two years. Notwithstanding the fears that had been entertained at the time of his appointment, it was soon conceded that no abler man had served the charge. In all departments of the work he was eminently successful. The congregation continued large, the Sunday school was in good condition, the social meetings well attended, and every interest bore the impress of substantial prosperity.

Still the society contained a few who were not satisfied. Like all other Churches, the Berlin Station had its one-idea men, each of whom wished the entire time and attention of the minister devoted to his favorite hobby. Brother Titus, the class-



leader, was deeply interested in the success of class-meetings, and was disaffected that the pastor did not make them more prominent. He believed expulsion from the Church should follow all cases where they were neglected, and made bitter complaints because delinquents were allowed to remain. In regard to the other means of grace he was not so particular. He was himself not unfrequently absent from the preaching, and even from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and seemed to forget that these were ordained of God, while the other was instituted by man.

Mr. How was a temperance reformer. He had seen and felt the evils of intemperance, and was all absorbed in efforts to effect their cure. To him it was a matter of great surprise that the minister did not preach oftener on this subject. According to his view, it should be introduced into every Sabbath service and made the prominent topic of pulpit discourse.

Mr. Johnson was an abolitionist of the strictest sect. His mind was upon those in bonds, until, in spirit, he had become bound with them. That the preacher should ever pray or even exhort without alluding to the sin of oppression, was evidence of a want of interest in this great subject. He must surely be tinctured with pro-slaveryism thus to pass it by. In his view, a minister should cry aloud and spare not, that is, *cease* not, until this giant sin was removed. Since Mr. Oley did not do this, he was put down as a time-server, and classed with the unfaithful shepherds, upon whom rests the curse of God.

Brother Benton was a zealous advocate of special holiness. Though he admitted that the minister preached faithfully on every point of practical duty, and urged the Church to an entire devotion of her energies to the work of the Lord, yet, as he did not make use of certain controverted words and phrases, he was not a believer in full



salvation. This brother, and those who agreed with him, including Mr. Titus, were very ardent in prayer that the pastor might be brought into the enjoyment of perfect liberty. While upon their knees they not unfrequently told the Lord *and the congregation* of his defects, and administered rebukes and uttered denunciations of the most painful character.

A few others were displeased with the minister and his labors; but the intelligent and really pious portion of the Church were highly gratified. Men who had minds capacious enough to grasp more than a single idea at a time, and comprehend the relation of one interest to another, saw a steady and uniform progress throughout the whole Church. They felt that God was with them, and rejoiced continually in the revelations of his love.

That the men referred to were disaffected was nothing new nor strange. The time when they were satisfied was not within

“the memory of the oldest inhabitant.” They invariably marked out the course in which a minister should walk, and the least variation from it called forth their anathemas. As we have seen, they each had a way entirely different; being widely separated in their views and feelings, yet making common cause in opposition to their pastor. Brother Oley felt their adverse influence, and, though not personally affected by it, saw with pain, that the zeal of these men had eaten them up, and that the cause which they professed to love, and in which he had an equal interest, was made to suffer from their ill-timed and unreasonable demands.

To the credit of Berlin Station it should be stated that the number of this class of malcontents was quite limited; yet it was sufficiently numerous to counteract much good that might otherwise have been accomplished. They, without exception, intended to be good men, and were, in fact,



possessed of noble impulses ; but their enthusiasm and the want of general information, from which it in a great measure resulted, had made and kept them what they were.

The younger members of the society were greatly hindered by these brethren. Their attention was diverted and their efforts paralyzed by the constant detraction which they were compelled to hear. Mr. Holmes became at one time quite discouraged. If he believed the representations made, his faith in the pastor was shaken, and he felt that he could confide in no man if not in Brother Oley. If he discredited them, his confidence in the Church was weakened ; for he was not able to see how good men could indulge such a captious and carping spirit. Especially was he affected by the constant charge of unholiness made against both minister and people.

“If the Church is as bad as Brother Titus represents,” said he one day to his friend

Ames, "wherein does it differ from the world?"

"I have thought of that myself," was the reply, "when I have heard him and Brother Benton speak and pray."

"I don't think I should have ever sought religion if such representations had been made before I was converted," continued Mr. Holmes.

"We should have had poor encouragement truly," said Mr. Ames.

"There is not much to encourage us if these representations are correct."

"I don't think they are correct."

"Nor I either. We have become acquainted with too many good members to believe this. I wish those brethren would not always look on the dark side, and turn our attention there also," added Mr. Holmes.

"Brother Vernon says this results from a want of faith and love," answered his friend; "and I presume he is correct."

"But they profess to be perfect in love."



"Professions don't amount to much when a man says he loves you, and at the same time does all he can to detract from your character and standing."

"That's very true."

"It seems that these men do so whenever they speak of the Church."

"Yes; and I have been greatly afflicted by it," said Mr. Holmes.

"I believe there are a great many good men in this Church, and I don't intend to give up my religion," answered Mr. Ames emphatically.

"Nor I either," said Mr. Holmes, in a more determined tone.

Thus they strengthened each other. The brethren who were ever criticising the preacher and finding fault with his administration could have hardly realized the influence they were exerting. They frequently warned the converts that they would find trials in the way, without once suspecting that they were doing more than all others to

fulfill their predictions; yet such was the case. Nothing can sadden the heart of a true disciple or dampen his joys more completely than to hear older Christians speaking lightly of the Church and its ministers. This is especially true when those persons profess superior piety, and have the confidence of such as hear them.



## CHAPTER V.

THE APPROACHING CONFERENCE — NOVELTY — DISCUSSION OF  
MINISTERIAL CHARACTER — A MISTAKE — FAREWELL TOKEN  
— MUTUAL PLEASURE.

THE approach of another session of the conference awakened considerable uneasiness among the members of the Berlin Church. Many of them were just becoming acquainted with the retiring pastor, for Mr. Oley's term was about to expire, and were beginning to appreciate his merits, so as to realize the loss they were to suffer. From the beginning they had respected him for his talents and industry, and were now learning to love him as a counselor and friend. To this class, and it embraced the better part of the station, the thought of separation was exceedingly painful; and among them the itinerancy, with its merits

and demerits, was discussed as freely as ever. Many a remonstrance went up from the hearts of the people as the change was about to be made, and many a secret prayer was offered that the time of ministerial service might be extended, as was in some quarters already proposed.

Still, the people were loyal to the Church. There was no disposition to hinder the legitimate workings of the plan that had been adopted. They felt that while the rule remained, it must be kept; and most of them possessed sufficient discernment to see that it was of no avail to murmur or complain. With but few exceptions, a change to three or five years was thought desirable; but it was to be sought in the way provided by the ecclesiastical constitution to which they were subject.

A small number only were pleased with such frequent changes. Some loved change for the novelty of it, and were always more



active with a new minister than with an old one. When a stranger came on the station their zeal knew no limit; but no sooner did he become fairly settled and prepared for his work, than they began to wonder who would be his successor. Their interest in the next preacher caused them to forget the present incumbent, and led them to look anxiously forward to the day of change. Thus they were constantly unsettled. Every minister in the surrounding country was in turn discussed and passed upon with an air of authority that seemed to give the matter a final settlement. Reports would go out that the Berlin Station wanted Brother A. next year. In a few days another would be in circulation that Brother B. was their man, and that they were especially anxious not to have Brother C. Soon it would be said that they had settled on Brother D., and thus a long list would be gone through with, when, in fact, the Church knew

nothing of the matter. The uneasy spirits had simply spoken, and made an exhibition of their uneasiness. They had mistaken themselves for the society, and disgraced the Church by the proclamation of their wild and senseless vagaries.

As Mr. Oley was to leave in the course of a few weeks, his friends resolved to give him an expression of their regard for himself and family, by some substantial tokens that might, at the same time, add to his convenience and comfort. The young men took the lead, and furnished him a valuable watch, with an appropriate inscription, while the ladies presented Mrs. Oley with a rich dress and other articles of a corresponding character. These were given not simply for their intrinsic value to the preacher, but as an assurance that his labors had been appreciated, and that he carried with him the respect and confidence of those whom he had served.

As had been supposed, Mr. Oley viewed



this as the most important consideration involved. He knew that ungenerous feelings had been entertained by the class to whom reference has been made, and, at the same time, had no means of knowing the extent to which they might be indulged. Situated thus, an incident which brought to him a voluntary offering from his people, that was intended as a mark of respect and a token of affection, furnished great encouragement.

It was also a pleasure to the donors. They felt that the act had cheered the pastor's heart, and rejoiced that they were able to lighten the load that sat so heavily upon him. With the result, it would be difficult to tell which party was most highly gratified. Under such circumstances, it was blessed both to give and receive, and the Gospel rule alone can determine who received the highest reward.

These gifts were bestowed at what was denominated a farewell visit. A consider-

able number of the contributors assembled at the minister's house without having acquainted him with the ulterior object of their call. Brother Vernon, though quite along in years, had not become superannuated in good works, and was among the happiest participants of the visit. His genial smiles had driven many a cloud from the pastor's brow, and his kind offices had, through a long and useful life, cheered the hearts and sustained the hands that seemed ready to sink. The party on this occasion was chiefly under his guidance, and greatly indebted to his kind attentions for its happy results.



## CHAPTER VI.

THE PREACHER'S SALARY — RAISING A DEFICIENCY — EX-  
CUSES — SCHOOL FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN NATURE —  
LESSONS.

A FEW days previous to the close of Brother Oley's term of service, an official meeting was called to take into consideration the financial affairs of the station. It was ascertained from the reports that there was quite a deficiency on the preacher's salary yet unprovided for, and it was proposed to devise means that it might be met before the session of conference. Mr. Vernon made a statement of facts, and concluded by saying, "We must not let our preacher go away unpaid. As a Church we are *able* to give our pastor a comfortable support, and should do so cheerfully."

"I had hoped," said Brother Gray, "that

we should come out even this year. I am getting tired of making up deficiencies. Brother Oley ought to have his pay, however."

"Well, how do you propose to raise it?" asked Mr. Benton.

As no one made an immediate reply, the question was repeated.

"We must put our hands in our pockets and pay it," answered Mr. Vernon. "The Church has enjoyed the benefit of Brother Oley's labors, and should be willing to remunerate him."

"I hope he hasn't been preaching for money," put in Mr. Benton, in an undertone.

"We ought to pay Brother Oley twice as much as we do, and we could just as well as not if we were disposed to," said Mr. Ames.

"I'd like to know how it would be raised," retorted Mr. Gray, who had always advocated a reduction in the minister's salary.

"There is no difficulty in that only as it



exists in our disposition," said Mr. Vernon, mildly; "we are able, and, I trust, willing to do what is right in this matter."

"I move that we open a subscription and make up the balance," said Mr. Toby.

"And the same ones that signed before will have to sign again," said Mr. Gray.

"Certainly," was the reply. "I recollect when you put your name to the paper at the beginning of the year, you said you would put down more if you did not expect to be called upon to make up a deficiency in the end; and so with several others. We simply saved a portion of what we thought we ought to pay for just such a time as this."

"Well, well, go on," said the rich steward, "and see how it will come out."

After a little parleying, the motion was agreed to, and as Mr. Ames was the youngest member of the board, and had shown considerable interest in the matter, he was appointed to draw up and circulate the

paper. Taking a pen, he drew a subscription and proposed to begin on the spot. Knowing Mr. Gray to be the wealthiest man in the Church, and encouraged by the remark of Brother Toby, who had thus far attended to this business, he first handed the paper to him, with the request that he should head it.

“No, no,” said he; “go on and get what you can; I’ll see by and by.”

“But I want your name, Brother Gray. You made the motion that I should circulate the subscription, and you certainly ought to help carry out the plan.”

“I shall not *sign* anything; I’ll give something before Brother Oley goes away, but won’t put it down,” was the answer.

A little mortified at this refusal, he turned away and gave the paper into the hands of Mr. Vernon, who, without a word, put a liberal sum opposite his name, and passed it on to Mr. Palmer and one or two others, who did the same. As it came to Brother



Titus he shook his head, with the remark, "No, I believe I shall not give anything."

"Why not?" said Mr. Ames, looking quite surprised.

"I think he has had enough."

"He is behind a hundred and fifty dollars of enough to meet his expenses."

"Then he must curtail his expenses," was the dry answer.

"I don't know how that could be done. Very few of us live on as small a sum as we allow him, providing it is all paid," said Mr. Ames. "Besides, I believe you were one of the committee to estimate his expenses at the beginning of the year, and you fixed upon this sum as necessary to carry him through."

"Well, I have done all I shall. I have not enjoyed his preaching much."

"He is certainly a good preacher."

"He may be for some, but he is not for me," was the reply.

The young steward was greatly hurt at

this demonstration. Brother Titus professed to enjoy an unusual amount of religion. He seldom spoke in class or prayer meeting but that he represented himself as given up to God in a peculiar sense. All that he had was upon the altar, consecrated to his Master's service. These professions, put in contrast with his present conduct, looked so absurd and meaningless that Mr. Ames felt his confidence greatly shaken.

Mr. Benton sat next. "I have paid all I shall," said he, when the paper was presented.

"How much is that?" inquired Brother Toby, who, as treasurer, was familiar with the facts.

"I don't remember now."

"Well, I do," was the response; "it is just one dollar."

The brother looked a little confused, but handed the paper along without any further reply. Mr. Ames thought of the many severe reproofs to which he had listened



from Brother Benton, and the claims to a high state of religious enjoyment which had been persistently put forth. Every one knew that Mr. Benton was well off, and could pay if he chose. Covetousness was seen to be at the bottom of the affair, and in more minds than one the unwelcome conclusion was reached that he did not live up to his professions.

Mr. Putnam could not be induced to say whether he would give anything or not. "I'll see, I'll see," was his only response; and with this reply, which was, under the circumstances, equivalent to a refusal, the matter was dropped.

Not overmuch encouraged by his success in the official board, Mr. Ames went out among the members to seek the balance. The greater part responded honorably to the call; but he found enough in the course of his tour to try his faith and jeopardize his patience. He was an ardent admirer of Mr. Oley, and had supposed that others

loved him as well as he did. As a general thing he found this to be true; but his astonishment knew no bounds at the variety of complaints that were made as excuses for not contributing to his support. Brother Walton thought the preacher had not visited him as often as he did some other members; Brother Jones had heard him laugh in company with some unconverted persons, and did not think it his duty to give to a minister so light and trifling; Sister Smith would do nothing, because Sister Ellet had been talking about her, and her feelings were hurt; Sister Ellet could not contribute so long as Sister Smith was in the Church; Brother M'Donald would not give to one who lived in better style than he could afford to; Mr. How said the preacher had not done his duty on the temperance question; Brother Johnson made the same assertion as to abolitionism; and thus one after another offered excuses by which to save a little money and rob the servant



of God of that to which he was justly entitled.

In the midst of the discouragement of Mr. Ames, Brother Vernon met him and congratulated him rather playfully upon the advantages which he possessed for the study of human nature: "I never profess to know a man until I have presented him a subscription paper and obtained his answer," said he.

"I confess I have learned some things since I began this work," replied Mr. Ames. "I have been greatly disappointed in regard to some of our brethren."

"I knew you would be," said the old gentleman, laughing.

"Some people talk one thing and do another," added the steward.

"Never judge a man, nor form your opinion of his religious attainments solely by what he says in church. Persons who are there sincere in what they say, are, nevertheless, often mistaken, and need the

application of some other test. The one you carry is a very good touchstone, and on its application has exposed the spuriousness of many a man's pretensions."

"You will never get me at this business again," said Mr. Ames.

"We will look to that," added his friend, rather shrewdly, as he ran his eye over the paper, and saw at a glance that he had succeeded finely.

We will not follow Mr. Ames in the further prosecution of his work. To him it was new business; and no man who has not circulated a church subscription can appreciate his feelings. By the way, this kind of a subscription is different to most men's minds from any other. A great many Church members will give to an agricultural society, invest money freely in the wildest and most uncertain speculations, and lose their hundreds and thousands, contribute for all sorts of public improvements, and sacrifice freely for their



friends, that are all aghast at the thought of paying from ten to fifty dollars to the Church. The claims of the Gospel to a man's purse are made subordinate to every other demand. According to their view, the claims of the world have their basis in the principles of justice, those of religion in generosity, and "we must be just before we are generous."

Never was there a greater mistake than is generally involved in the use of this adage. No man is doing simply a favor in supporting the Gospel. It must be done liberally, or the claims of justice are not met. In this respect, charity and almsgiving are out of the question. There is no more generosity in the act of paying the preacher than in footing the bills of the tailor or the merchant.

## CHAPTER VII.

REV. MR. WILSON — FIRST IMPRESSIONS — VARIETY OF OPINIONS — A DECLENSION — REMEDY.

MR. OLEY went from his charge to the conference with many assurances that he bore with him the love and gratitude of his brethren. His pastorate at Berlin had brought him into joyous associations, and gained him many valuable friends. It would have been pleasant indeed to have remained with them, and continued to share in their sympathies and their counsels, but this was impossible. The great itinerant wheel was about making its annual revolution, and his steps were sure to be turned to a different locality.

As he left his station, the usual parting scenes were witnessed. Many of the people felt they were suffering a loss that could



not be made up. Most of them, however, assumed a kind of stoical indifference that enabled them to say, "It is according to our rules, and we have no reason to complain." With but few exceptions this feeling was wholly assumed. The number of persons is extremely limited that can allow ties of this character to be rudely sundered, and find no rising murmur within. Multitudes may submit without the utterance of a single complaint, because they think the result, on the whole, to be for the glory of God. But to the feelings of the people in general it is a sacrifice of the severest character.

The Rev. Mr. Wilson was appointed his successor in charge of the Berlin Station. The news was first received from a preacher who was passing through the village on the way to his own appointment. "Who is Mr. Wilson?" was the first inquiry from the lips of every one who heard the tidings. No one seemed to be acquainted with him,

though several recollected having seen his name in the Conference Minutes. He was a total stranger to the charge, having never labored in that section of the work.

Some ten days after word was received of his appointment, the new minister made his appearance. He first called on Brother Vernon, who extended to him and his family a cordial welcome. This excellent man had entertained so many preachers in his day that it had ceased to be an embarrassment. No one came to his dwelling that he was not prepared to receive, and to whom he did not extend a hearty greeting.

Word passed rapidly from house to house, until it was generally understood that the preacher had come. All were anxious to see and hear him, for though he was a stranger, he occupied a relation to them of the utmost importance. As might be expected, he was not in favorable circumstances to make a good impression.



With the labor of attending conference, packing and unpacking goods, he was well nigh worn down, and could not be expected to appear like himself.

Various were the opinions formed and expressed as he was introduced to one after another of his parishioners.

"He looks pretty rusty," said Mrs. Gray, on her return from a call at Brother Vernon's.

"I guess he is rather backwoodsy," put in one of the daughters, who had accompanied her. "I hope he will dress better than at present if he is going to stay with us."

"I don't like the looks of his wife," said Mr. Gray, who was also one of the party; "she don't look to me as if she was economical. I hope we are not going to have another extravagant minister's wife," he continued, keeping his eye, as usual, on the dollars and cents.

"He don't look as if he could preach

much," said Brother Bissell to Mr. Burns, the local preacher, as they met in the street.

"No, that he don't," was the reply. "We shall have dry times this year, you may rest assured. I did hope we should get a good man for once."

"Well, he may be *good*, for all I know," answered Mr. Bissell.

"I mean a good preacher," responded Brother Burns. "We don't get any such men here as in the old country, I can tell you. If you could only hear Bunting and Dr. 'Annah, or Brother Harthur, you would think so too."

"Our new preacher isn't very spiritual," answered Brother Benton, as he was inquired of by Mr. Oliver, the other local preacher. "I was with him some time yesterday, and he scarcely introduced the subject of salvation at all. . I had hoped we should have a holy man this year; but it seems the preachers are not much better than the people."



"Perhaps he will be all you desire when you hear him, and get acquainted," ventured Brother Oliver.

"No, no; not that. I can tell what a man is as soon as I see him. He is not the man for this place, that's certain. We'll have to dig him out, and get him baptized, before anything is done."

"I like him first rate," said Brother Toby, who came up in time to hear the last remark. "I have decided long ago to like all the preachers that are sent to us. That is the only way to get along and enjoy one's self in the Church."

"Yes," answered Brother Oliver, "that is undoubtedly the better way."

"Brother Wilson is a good man," said Mr. Vernon to his friend Ames. "I am greatly pleased with him and his family, so far as I can judge from our brief acquaintance."

"He may be all you say," replied Mr. Ames; "but we can't always help our

likes and dislikes. I don't think he will be Brother Bliss or Brother Oley to me. Still, I am going to hope for the best."

"I called on him," said Brother Holmes, "and think he appears very well. If we must have a change, I am satisfied thus far with Brother Wilson."

"He is not sociable; I could scarcely get him to talk about the affairs of the station," answered Brother Titus, when inquired of as to his opinion. "I tried to draw him out on a good many points, to see what he thought of such management as we have had at Berlin, but could get nothing out of him. He'll prove a dry stick, I'll venture."

Thus opinions were freely expressed by nearly all parties. In some minds prejudices were already formed, that it would take weeks and months to remove. In the mean time the whole congregation were looking forward to the coming Sabbath with great interest. In this feeling no one



shared more fully than did the pastor. He felt the delicacy of his position, and was embarrassed by the circumstances with which he was surrounded. Brother Vernon did all in his power to prepare the way for him, and encourage him in his arduous work. His friendship and unaffected sympathy proved an invaluable support.

The Sabbath came, and Mr. Wilson made his first appearance in the pulpit. It was a bright, beautiful morning, that called for a tribute of praise from all God's creatures, and an unusually large number were found in the house of God. Mr. Wilson entered the pulpit, evidently laboring under much embarrassment. He preached a plain, practical sermon, without any effort at display, and which, on ordinary occasions, would have been well received. As it was, it called forth a vast amount of criticism. Every hearer had an opinion to express; and with the majority it was unfavorable. A number of leading brethren were sure



the congregation would run down under such preaching, and made no scruple in giving utterance to their sentiments, even in the presence of unconverted persons. Others spoke encouragingly ; and still others thought it best to wait a little before their minds were made up. They felt that wise conclusions could be reached only by waiting for opportunities not yet enjoyed.

Several distinct results were immediately apparent from this change of pastors. The first has been already seen in the uneasiness and restlessness introduced among the members. From this sprang several others. The unconverted part of the congregation lost their interest in the Church. If the members had sufficient cause to be dissatisfied, it was certainly enough to alienate them, and a number of families ceased their regular attendance on the means of grace. Some of these were liberal supporters of the Church, and bade fair in the



future to become valuable members. They were not driven away so much by anything they had seen in the new minister, as by the criticisms which the brethren, who were supposed to know all the facts, were making in their hearing. Some of them went to other denominations, some stood aloof, and some became afterward reattached to the congregation, from which they now withdrew their attendance.

There was also some backsliding among the members. Several who were weak and wavering were now totally discouraged. The class-leaders might have saved them to the Church if they had acted faithfully in their capacity as preachers' assistants; but, unfortunately, one or two of them were among the loudest of those who were producing this very result. No greater calamity can befall any Church than the appointment of a captious, fault-finding class-leader. Brother Titus and Brother



Benton were not the men to encourage the doubtful to hold on amid a storm which they themselves had in great part produced. A few hopes were, therefore, wrecked, and immortal life snatched, as it were, from the possession of such as fell an easy prey to the fell destroyer.

All these results would have been prevented by a proper reception of the new preacher. Mr. Vernon and others saw and felt this fact, but could afford no remedy. They did what they could, and were conscious of the Divine blessing in sustaining the servant of the Lord, who came among them as a pilgrim and a stranger.

Mr. Wilson could not fail to see the influence exerted, and be affected by it. He was pained, and partially discouraged by the evident decline of his congregation, and the coolness with which a portion of his brethren had received him. The reason of all this he could not explain, and having



no tried and intimate friend on whom he could rely, he kept his reflections to himself, and went forward as best he could in the work to which he had been appointed.

## CHAPTER VIII.

LOSS AND GAIN — A REACTION — REPAIRING THE PARSONAGE  
— SELF-DENIAL OF THE FATHERS — FURNITURE — THE  
FESTIVAL — RENEWED PROSPERITY — ITS CAUSE.

Not many months had elapsed before it was conceded that Mr. Wilson was a most excellent pastor. He was not a great pulpit orator; in this respect not equal to his predecessor; but he preached well, and ministered ably to the wants of the people. The congregation assumed its wonted tone of satisfaction, though some families had, in the mean time, formed other associations, and were now beyond the reach of his influence. In their place others became attached to the faithful minister, and were identified with the interests of the station. In this way the loss suffered was in a measure made up; and yet it was none the



less a loss. These acquisitions would doubtless have been gained had the old friends been retained, and thus an actual increase have been secured. As it was, nothing more could be done than to restore and keep the congregation to its wonted dimensions.

During this year it was thought best to rebuild the parsonage. The house that had been occupied thus far was small and inconvenient, though some thought it good enough for a minister. Brother Gray, especially, could not see the necessity of so much expenditure; but when it was decided upon, he contributed toward carrying the enterprise to its completion. Brother Titus would give nothing, and Brother Benton but little in proportion to his means. In the opinion of this class of Christians, ministers should not look for ease or comfort in this life. Their reward was in heaven, not on earth. The fathers, who introduced the Gospel into this new and



sparsely populated country, made great sacrifices for the cause, and these their sons should do the same. Instead of that, they were constantly calling on the people, and insisting that they should share the responsibility and burden of preaching the word. In their view the demands made were truly exorbitant, and the sacrifice too great to be endured. For a few years past the people had heard nothing but "Give, give, give."

Thus a few clamored whenever called upon to aid in the temporalities of the Church. Almost invariably their discourse would run into a eulogy of the fathers, when they grew eloquent in praise of the past and condemnation of the present. It did not once enter their minds that the duty of self-denial was as applicatory to themselves as to the ministry. They seemed to argue that a man called to labor for God in the pulpit, must give up houses and lands, honors and riches; that his fellow, called to



labor for the same Master in other portions of the vineyard, might abound in these treasures and gather riches and honor without limit.

There was no other reason for such sacrifices as they demanded of preachers of the Gospel. In the days of the noble pioneers who carried the tidings of salvation into the wilderness, it was a necessity that they should suffer, because they were almost alone in the work which they had undertaken. But the scene has changed. Literally the Church is rich, and luxury abounds in all her borders. Her laborers, who go forth to sow the seed and gather the harvest, must go unpaid, if at all, for no other reason than to add to the gains of those whom they serve.

Fortunately for the Berlin Church the number of such Christians was limited, and their influence circumscribed. The majority were of a different opinion. There were many among them who felt it not simply a

duty, but also a privilege, to provide as far as possible for the comfort of the pastor and his family. They had no sympathy with that feeling which tells a preacher to trust in Providence for his living, in any other sense than they would instruct the farmer or mechanic to do the same. They were sufficiently well acquainted with the Scripture plan of salvation to know that the burdens of Christianity were to be no more confined to the few than were its blessings.

When the parsonage was nearly completed, it occurred to some of those who are always looking for opportunities to do good, that it ought to be furnished. It seemed too much to ask the itinerant to carry his heavy articles of household furniture from place to place, adding the unnecessary expense to the wear and tear, when it could be so easily avoided. As the brethren had contributed freely to provide a house, their wives and daughters undertook the task of supplying it with such things as might tend



most largely to relieve the hardships of an itinerant life.

They accordingly organized a sewing society, and plied their needles with all dispatch to aid in securing so desirable a result. A subscription was also opened, and many who could not attend the society made up for the lack by contributing directly to its funds. In this way quite a little sum was secured against the time when it should be wanted.

Having done what they could in this direction, the ladies determined to make up the balance by means of a festival. By unwearied efforts the arrangements were made, a supper provided, and such refreshments prepared as were becoming the occasion. They then invited their friends to partake of the repast by paying for tickets of admission, the proceeds to be applied to this object. Their call met with a hearty and liberal response. The gathering was had, an hour or two spent in social converse and

in listening to remarks from the pastor and others, when the company dispersed, highly gratified with the occasion. They had not only aided in a good work, but had added much to their own stock of social enjoyment.

By this means entire success was secured. The preacher's home was furnished with the most cumbersome, and, at the same time, substantial and necessary articles of house-keeping. No one felt the poorer for what he had done, or seemed to regret his share of the work. The whole community approved the act, because they saw, in the end accomplished, an exhibition of those principles which most highly adorn the Christian character.

And yet all were not pleased. Brothers Titus, Benton, and some half dozen others, were greatly scandalized that members of the Church should make "a party," and talk and visit in so exact imitation of the world. They would have no sooner gone to the



festival than to a circus. Brother Benton's holy horror was fully aroused. Every class-meeting was witness of his indignation. Reproofs, severe and unmitigated, were freely administered. He was instant in season and out of season in rebuking so high-handed an offense.

Had it not been for his well known covetousness, which was supposed to lie at the bottom of his conscientiousness, those who had done most in this matter would have felt highly aggrieved. As it was, they allowed his denunciations to pass with merited silence. He was doubtless sincere in his convictions, but had been schooled in a mistaken theology. In fact he belonged to that class best described by our Saviour's figure of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel.

The second year of Mr. Wilson's ministry was blessed with a precious revival. Through the regular means of grace about forty persons were converted and added to

the Church. It was a valuable accession, and those who labored for the prosperity of Zion were greatly cheered. In things spiritual and temporal Mr. Wilson's term was highly prosperous; and now that it had nearly expired, he was able to look back and rejoice in the manifold mercies of God.

Berlin could now take rank among the first-class appointments. The parsonage improvement added much to its desirableness as a station, as it not only gave a home to the preacher, but told the spirit of the people. How much this had to do with the recent revival could not be easily determined; but those who have watched the course of events will not deny that an intimate connection usually exists between financial liberality and spiritual triumphs.



## CHAPTER IX.

PETITIONING FOR A PREACHER — CONTENDING FOR A PRINCIPLE — DIVERSITY OF OPINION — REV. MR. DUNN — A LOBBY MEMBER AT CONFERENCE — SUCCESS.

As the session of the conference was about to be held, and it was known that Mr. Wilson must go away and a stranger come in his place, the usual interest was awakened and the usual uneasiness experienced. Notwithstanding the lessons of the past and the assurances furnished by the itinerancy as to the future, the members could not banish thoughts of care from their minds, or look with unconcern on so important a change.

Brother Gray and some others were so thoroughly convinced of the necessity of having a good preacher for the next two years, that they thought it best to make their own selection and send a petition to

the appointing power, thus virtually taking the matter into their own hands. They had no reason to complain of the men who had been sent them, and no especial cause of doubt but what equally good appointments would continue to be made; yet it was thought to be an improvement becoming an age of progress to ask for the gratification of their own preference. An official meeting was accordingly called and the subject introduced.

In the absence of the pastor, who usually presided, Brother Bissell was called to the chair, when a motion was made that an informal ballot be taken, as an expression of the preferences of those present. Brother Vernon was opposed to this action, as he could see no good likely to result from it. "It is," said he, "an innovation on our established usages. The old plan has worked well, and there is no reason that demands a change.

"We certainly ought to have something



to say as to who shall serve us," said Brother Gray. "Other charges petition, and have their choice, and why should not we? So long as we have to pay the preacher we ought to demand one of the first class."

"I am in favor of the motion," said Brother Ames, "but hope no reflection will be cast on our former pastors. They have been good enough for any Church."

"And so we shall continue to have good men if we let matters take the usual way. There are men appointed to the oversight of this work who know much more about the preachers than we, and can do better for us than we can do for ourselves," said Brother Vernon.

"I have no one in view that I desire above others," said Mr. Ames, "but I think the laity should have something to say in such a matter."

"That's it," said Brother Gray; "it is the *principle* we are after."

"We care more for the principle involved

than anything else," added Brother Benton, while several others nodded assent.

"If there is anybody that should have their say in the appointments it is the people who have to pay the money," put in Brother Titus.

"Yes, we ought to send up a petition and insist on its being granted," added Mr. Gray.

"I like the principle of equal rights as well as any one," said Brother Toby; "but there are several things here to be taken into consideration. If the people claim the right of choosing their pastors, then the preachers must be awarded the right of choosing their places. These may both be said to be rights that belong to the parties. The itinerancy is based upon their relinquishment for the good of the cause, in which each is supposed to have an equal interest. Now if we take back what we have given up, the preachers must be allowed to do the same, and there is an end



of our system, and the practice of bargaining for men and places will become general."

"Yes," said Brother Vernon. "Suppose we select a man and he refuses to come; equal rights give him the same authority to decline that is given us to select."

"But the preachers are bound to go where they are sent," said Mr. Benton.

"Very true," resumed Mr. Vernon; "they are thus bound by the system to which we have referred. They have agreed to give up the right of choice on condition that we, the laity, do the same, but not otherwise. The action we propose is a repeal of the compromise upon which the itinerancy rests."

"Well, other charges petition, and so may we," said Mr. Gray, without noticing the arguments advanced on the other side. "I am not willing to submit any longer to having men sent here without our voice, while we have them to support."

The vote was taken and the motion carried by a large majority. They had a new parsonage and everything in good order, and must have their own way. Brother Benton acted as teller and collected the ballots, on which were written the names of such preachers as the different members desired. On counting them it was found that no unanimity of sentiment prevailed. No one had a majority or anything approaching it. The second ballot produced a similar result.

A discussion then arose as to the merits of the several candidates. Remarks were made for and against different preachers, whose reputation was handled with the utmost freedom. When a name was proposed, those who favored some one else felt in duty bound to say all they could against him. In a little time more than one excellent herald of the cross had his usefulness destroyed within the bounds of Berlin Station; and still the carnage went on. Gossip of the



worst kind was freely indulged, and every vague report which Madam Rumor had seen fit to put in circulation was repeated with most sanctimonious airs.

It was evident that no one of the candidates could be agreed upon, and Brother Vernon again proposed that the whole matter be dropped; but the majority had resolved to petition. They began to look around for some one against whom no objections could be raised. At length such a name was proposed. The Rev. Mr. Dunn was a prominent man in the conference, and generally took the first appointments. He had never been at Berlin, and was known there only by reputation. Brother Gray proposed his name, and all were convinced that it was the best they could do. He received a nearly unanimous vote, the petition was made out, duly signed in behalf of the Church, and forwarded to the bishop.

Fearful that the plan might not succeed, Brother Gray resolved to go up to the con-

ference and lobby for the success of the enterprise. He did so, and carried his point. He came back highly elated with the result, and feeling assured that the future prosperity of Berlin Station was rendered certain. The appointment was highly flattered. It had demanded and secured a first-class preacher.

Still there was a less general satisfaction than usual at the appointment of a new pastor. Many felt aggrieved that their favorite candidate had not been agreed upon, and argued with themselves that they had been slighted in having their opinions set aside. Against Mr. Dunn no man had an objection, and as all who favored petitioning had consented to the arrangement, they were bound to make him welcome.



## CHAPTER X.

THE FIRST QUARTERLY CONFERENCE — MAKING AN “ALLOW-  
ANCE” — A STRIKE — DISCUSSION — THE SALARY RAISED  
— THE DONATION VISIT — A MISTAKE CORRECTED.

It was about two weeks after the session of the conference closed when Mr. Dunn, the recently-appointed pastor, made his appearance. He was well received by all parties, and seemed disposed to enter at once upon his work. His family accompanied him, and, by the help of several brethren and sisters, their goods were soon unpacked and arranged in the parsonage, to the comfort of all concerned. Though nothing was said directly on the subject, some of the leading members thought they saw evidences that Mr. and Mrs. Dunn were not highly pleased with the arrangement which had brought them to their present position. The quar

terly conference, which met a short time after, threw some light on the subject, and opened to the Berlin official board a new chapter in the history of their station.

Mr. Gray, who was now unusually active in Church affairs, was appointed by the conference, chairman of the committee to estimate and fix the preacher's salary. The other business having been attended to, he made his report, fixing the allowance at the usual sum of four hundred dollars. This amount had been uniformly paid for the last ten years, and though the expense of living had nearly doubled, none of the members had proposed an increase. As was usual, a few desultory remarks were made, and the presiding elder was about to take the vote on the adoption of the report, when the Rev. Mr. Dunn asked if the committee and the conference had taken into consideration the circumstances of his family.

"I am not sure that you know them," he



added, "as I am a stranger, and no inquiries have been made."

"That is our regular salary here," replied Brother Gray.

"Then you allow all your preachers the same sum, giving a single man as much as one like myself, with a feeble wife and five children, do you?"

"We give four hundred dollars," said Mr. Gray, with some emphasis and a great deal of dignity.

"I suppose," interposed the presiding elder, "Brother Dunn cannot live on that."

"It is a delicate subject," resumed the pastor, "but I must speak plainly. That sum will by no means meet my current expenses. I have the wages of a hired girl to pay, and, including her, eight persons in my family. My oldest son must be educated away from home, as there is no suitable school here, and the others must enjoy such advantages as the Berlin schools afford."

"We would feel it a privilege to allow

more," said the chairman of the committee, "but see no way in which it can be raised."

"We have never paid more than that, and I think it is enough," put in Brother Benton.

"We would allow more if we only knew where the money would come from," said Mr. Gray. "It is doubtful whether we can raise even that this year. We have been taxed pretty heavily of late in refitting and furnishing the parsonage, and meeting other demands that come upon us."

"We certainly cannot go any higher," said Brother Titus.

"No, that we can't," said Father Wells. "Preachers didn't use to expect much of anything. When I first joined the Church they went about on horseback and were not troubled with large families as now. I never used to pay but two shillings a quarter. I think every member ought to pay that willingly. A great many small sums



put together amount to a large one in the end, you know."

"Well, brethren," said the presiding elder, "Brother Dunn is here, and must have a living. It is plain he will not be able to provide for his household out of four hundred dollars. I think you can add something to that. The laborer is worthy of his hire."

"It is not a lack of disposition, but a want of ability," said Brother Benton. "We would give more if we could."

"The committee were appointed to estimate Brother Dunn's expenses, and not the ability of the station," said the president.

"But we don't want to promise more than we can pay," rejoined Brother Gray.

"You can certainly make me a disciplinary *allowance*," said the preacher. "I must provide for my own house. I cannot consent to be *worse* than an infidel."

"Perhaps we *can* raise more," replied Mr. Gray. "I am sure we are willing the

preacher shall have all he can get. It is only a necessity that makes us fix the allowance at four hundred."

"I suppose the preacher will get just what you think proper to pay him," said Mr. Dunn. "When an allowance is being made out there is no *necessity* about it. You can estimate my expenses at just what they are likely to be as easily as at any less sum. Your failure to do so argues a want of disposition, not of means."

"Rather plain talk, I should think," said Brother Titus.

"I intend to talk plainly," said Mr. Dunn, in a pleasant tone.

"Well, now," said Brother Vernon, "I have said nothing thus far, but I want to say a word; I believe we can pay more just as well as not."

"Where will the *money* come from," asked Brother Benton, fairly affrighted.

"From our pockets," said Mr. Ames, interrupting the last speaker. "We are



really too bad to pinch our preachers as we have done. Brother Wilson ran behind last year more than a hundred dollars."

"That was not our fault," said Brother Gray; "we paid him all we agreed to."

"We ought to have agreed on a higher sum then."

"He didn't say anything but what he was satisfied," replied Mr. Gray.

"No, not he; "he was too good a man for that," said Brother Wells.

"I am sorry to hear that my predecessor was allowed to suffer among you," said Mr. Dunn. "I can't consent to do so. As a Church you are able to support me. I anticipated this difficulty before I came. I was to have gone to Belmont, where they would have given me eight hundred dollars, which I actually need; but your earnest petition broke up the arrangement. I am here at your dictation, and will do all I can for you, and ask nothing but my living. That I must have."

"I believe the Discipline allows the quarterly conference to fix the preacher's salary," replied Mr. Gray, a little nettled.

"Not exactly; it makes it the duty of the quarterly conference to estimate my table expenses and fuel, while the other items are already established. All I ask is a disciplinary allowance."

"We have never had a preacher stand out before," said Mr. Benton. "We don't allow our ministers to suffer."

"I have nothing further to say," quietly remarked Brother Dunn.

"I move that the allowance be fixed at six hundred dollars," said Brother Bissell.

Brother Ames named eight hundred, and Mr. Vernon proposed seven hundred. "If we had allowed the appointments to take the regular course," said Brother Vernon to Mr. Gray, aside, "we might have had a man with a smaller claim."

"I am glad of it," said Brother Ames; "we ought to pay eight hundred, and can



do it, if we have a mind to, just as well as not."

"The preachers must study economy," said Brother Gray. "The fact is, some of them are really extravagant."

"What does it cost you to live, Brother Gray, take one year with another?" asked Mr. Ames.

"I really don't know."

"Do you live on four hundred dollars?"

"No, I suppose not; but I don't believe it costs me eight hundred, though perhaps it may."

"You have four in your family?"

"Yes."

"And are not obliged to employ help to do housework?"

"No."

"Well, don't you think it must cost our pastor more to live than it does you?"

"But I live on my own money."

"And so does he. It is not a gift that we

are making. He labors for us and we pay him."

"I hope he don't preach for money," interrupted Brother Benton.

"I hope not either," answered Mr. Ames; "and I conclude that he does not, or he would not come here for what we are disposed to give, when he might earn twice as much in business."

Brother Vernon's motion to fix the salary at seven hundred dollars was finally put and carried, Mr. Gray and his friends not voting. The presiding elder quietly remarked that the preacher contributed just one hundred dollars by this arrangement to the support of the Gospel in Berlin; and that if the others did as well, there would be no difficulty in raising the amount.

Mr. Benton and Brother Gray now held a moment's consultation, in a low whisper, at the conclusion of which the latter moved that the donation visit usually made be dispensed with this year,



"I see no reason for taking such action," said one.

"Gentlemen," said the preacher, rising from his seat, "I have a word to say as to this matter. I do not ask a donation at your hands; indeed, I am not willing to receive one. I have asked my support as a right, and not as a favor. You can do no better thing for your minister than to give him a proper support without resorting to the expedient of a donation party. But when you vote his salary below a living figure, and then undertake to say that his friends shall not contribute to his relief, you show conclusively that you do not intend to give him a living. In fact this is an effort to hinder it. The plea of inability comes with a poor grace in such a connection. I think you have nothing to do with this matter. Anybody that chooses has a right to donate to whom he pleases."

"I suppose we have the matter in our own hands," said Brother Titus.

“Yes; but you will not have *me* in your hands, if you persist in this matter. I don’t ask you to say you will make me a donation; but you have no right to say that no one else shall.”

“That is not within our province, truly,” said Brother Vernon.

At his suggestion the subject was dropped, and the conference soon after adjourned. In private conversation the presiding elder congratulated Mr. Dunn on his firmness, and wished him success. Had this officer done his duty in the premises, he would have relieved the pastor from the necessity of interfering in the question of his own support; but he was a timid man, and generally allowed things of this character to take their own course. He was glad, however, to see the right prevail, and in the instance before him was especially gratified.

The brethren had scarcely left the church when several of them entered into a free conversation on the merits of the preacher.



"There is some nerve to that man," said Brother Ames.

"I guess we have caught a Tartar," responded Mr. Gray.

"We petitioned for him, I believe," put in Mr. Vernon, with an expressive smile.

"One thing is pretty clear; he preaches for money," said Brother Benton.

"We shall have no revival this year," added Mr. Titus.

"It wasn't so in old times," sighed Father Wells.

"I am glad he stands up to the mark," resumed Brother Ames. "We need just such a man."

"You'll never catch me petitioning for a man I don't know again," said Mr. Gray.

"Nor me, either," chimed in several.

"All things shall work together for good," said Brother Vernon playfully, as, in company with Brother Ames, he turned toward his home and left the party to their own reflections.

The history of the quarterly-conference action was soon noised abroad, and in almost every disinterested mind the verdict was in favor of the new minister. The intelligent classes saw in the action taken the way prepared for a more liberal and, consequently, a more successful policy in the management of the Berlin Church. With the exception of the two or three stewards, and some half dozen equally covetous neighbors, a general satisfaction prevailed.

To some persons it may seem out of place for a minister to insist on a competent living from those he serves. Under some circumstances it would be highly improper to make any such demand. Had Brother Dunn gone to a community of poor and ignorant heathen, and insisted on a compensation for his services, it would have been an outrage on the principles of the Gospel. But he came to a congregation of Christian men and women, whose *duty* it was to provide for his wants, and who were abund-



antly able to meet the obligation. Had he served them regardless of the performance of what was enjoined upon them, he would have injured both himself and his people. It is in vain to preach to a covetous man, hoping to do him good, without seeking to remove his covetousness. And so with a Church. Mr. Dunn's position was correct in theory, as all were willing to admit. They that preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. It is yet to be discovered how that which is right in theory becomes wrong in practice, or how a minister of the Gospel errs in insisting upon the practical performance of that which is acknowledged to be theoretically correct.

## CHAPTER XI.

PLEADING POVERTY — PUNISHING THE PREACHER — MEAN-  
NESS — ITS INFLUENCE.

It was soon ascertained that no embarrassment was likely to result from the increased salary which had been allowed for the present year. It was raised just as easily as the smaller one had been, though it is true the members were required to contribute more liberally than heretofore. As was anticipated by the more public-spirited portion of the Church, this was no disadvantage. Many of the members were hoarding up treasure almost without stint, and, mistaking covetousness for frugality, they held on to their gains with an astonishing tenacity. In the blunt language of Brother Toby, this was the largest, the richest, and the stingiest religious society in Berlin.



And yet nothing was more common than to hear the brethren, especially the rich ones, pleading poverty. Brother Gray liked a display well enough in his personal matters, but seemed to regard it as very desirable to make everybody believe that the Church was poor. In fact, as Mr. Holmes sometimes said, he made it a one-horse team and kept it so. Instead of magnifying the grace of God, and presenting a bold and fearless front to the enemy, he was ever insisting that the station was weak, and unable to accomplish the work whereunto it was appointed.

As a consequence, others came to view it in a similar light. So long as the members depreciated the Church, and made it appear contemptible, it was not to be expected that the wicked should show it much respect. They withheld it the more when they knew that all this was merely an excuse for throwing off Christian responsibilities, and an apology for the want of

liberality which was everywhere manifest.

Mr. Dunn proved a good preacher. He was one of those decided men, not easily trifled with, always ready to give and demand what was right. By this course no real friends were lost, but many gained. Brother Titus, Father Wells, and others, who find fault with every preacher, found fault with him; but in general he secured the respect and confidence of the community. His congregation soon visibly improved, and to the eye of the thoughtful observer, the Church was in a more prosperous condition than it had been for several years.

During the winter the friends began, as usual, to discuss the contemplated donation visit. As this was a custom of long standing, practiced by all denominations in Berlin, it was almost universally expected to take place. Brother Vernon accordingly gave notice on the Sabbath that there would



be a meeting of those favorable to such a visit, and invited all such to be present and participate in making the arrangements.

At the appointed time one of the classrooms was filled with those who responded to the call. To the surprise of the friends of the measure, who had called the meeting, there was soon manifest a determined opposition to the plan.

Brother Benton was greatly opposed to such parties. They were in too near conformity to the world. The preacher did not need one at present, so far as he knew; for though he lived neighbor to Brother Dunn, he had not heard him complain. This view was in perfect harmony with the feelings of Brother Titus, who had never attended on such an occasion and had no inclination to do so. Brother Gray kept silent, though it was evident he was the moving spirit of the opposition. Father Wells felt that the Church was being ruined by these constant calls for money. He was sure the preach-

ers were getting rich by such extravagant salaries. He remembered, with rapturous pleasure, the time when a hundred dollars a year satisfied them, and two shillings a quarter from each member was all that was demanded. For many years he had been hoping for the return of those good times, but the prospect was gloomier than ever. To his mind there was no means of making the preachers humble but by keeping them poor. This was one great duty of the Church, and he prayed that it might not be forgotten.

Thus the discussion went on, mostly confined to those who opposed the donation. But when the vote was taken their counsels were found not to prevail. It was thought by some that most of these objections, so piously urged, grew out of a desire to punish the preacher for insisting upon a salary, at the commencement of the year, that should be in some measure commensurate with his wants. When this failed Brother



Gray brought forward another plan, which he had held in reserve until the decision should be made. It was that the proceeds of the visit be divided between the preacher and the Church. He reminded the friends present that it was necessary to make some repairs on the house of worship, and the money could be raised in no easier way than to give a donation to the preacher, as usual, and then appropriate one half of it to this purpose. On his motion the plan was finally adopted, as a kind of compromise measure, and the committee appointed to carry it into execution. They were to notify the pastor of the arrangement, but were not to inform the public. Outwardly it was to pass as all others had done, as if solely for the preacher's benefit.

This plan was carried into effect. Mr. Dunn felt it to be an imposition on the community and an insult to himself, but allowed the managers to have their own way, as it was a matter in which he would

have been charged with selfish motives had he made any remonstrance. He saw it to be the purpose of Brother Gray and others to take from him all they could, as they had ever been chagrined at their failure to bring him to their terms at the beginning of the year.

It was a part of the plan that this item should not be made public. Studious efforts were made by its originators and advocates to keep its odious features from the knowledge of the people. But the desire was not successful, as Mr. Dunn, though expressing no disapprobation, spoke of it in such a way as to reveal the facts as extensively as possible. Eventually the arrangement was understood by the whole community, and the reputation of the Berlin Church was greatly injured. Indeed its best members had been heartily ashamed of the transaction from the beginning. They did not attempt to reconcile it with the stricter principles of honor, for every dis-



cerning mind saw at a glance that the scheme was unworthy the character of Christian men.

As might have been expected, the influence of this affair lasted for years. Brother Gray's shrewd management had not only injured himself, but had also disgraced the Church to which he belonged. It was long quoted against the genuineness of religion by the enemies of Christianity, who did not fail to strengthen themselves thereby in their skepticism and doubt.

## CHAPTER XII.

BROTHER GRAY AT CONFERENCE — REV. MR. SPENCER — A  
CHEAP PREACHER PROCURED — THE LOAVES AND FISHES.

At the close of a single year Mr. Dunn was removed to another charge. Though the majority of the congregation esteemed him highly as a minister and had desired his return, there was, nevertheless, no inconsiderable number who were pleased with the change. As Brother Gray again attended the conference, and his views and feelings were well known, it was generally suspected that he had something to do with the matter. So confident were Brother Dunn's especial friends of this, that they did not hesitate to express their disapprobation and charge the result upon the disaffected party. This gave rise to an unpleasant state of things in the Church, and led to remarks



from both parties contrary to the true spirit of Christian charity.

When it was known who was the newly-appointed pastor the dissatisfaction was considerably increased. The Rev. Mr. Spencer had been on neighboring appointments for several years, and was well known among the Berlin members. He had never been successful in his work, though it might be difficult to assign a reason, as his talents were of no mean order, and he was generally attentive and laborious. During the past year he had several times been heard to censure Brother Dunn for demanding so large a salary, and at times had strongly hinted to the disaffected stewards that the sum paid was unnecessary and uncalled for. His own allowance was put in contrast with that of his fellow-laborer, and his willingness to preach for a more limited sum was freely expressed. In this manner he had evidently sought to prepare the way for his own promotion, for it could not be concealed

that he desired an appointment to the Berlin Station.

The more sensible portion of the Church were highly displeased with this course; but as it furnished an excuse for covetousness and harmonized with the spirit of the fault-finders, it had made sure in winning their love. Those who thus became his friends at Berlin resolved, if possible, to secure his services for the coming year, by displacing Brother Dunn to give him room. They were too shrewd to make the plan public, as they knew it would then fail, and they had accordingly proceeded in secret. The result was secured by representing to Brother Dunn, after he had reached conference, that if he returned they should be obliged to make him a much smaller allowance than before, and he must come back with that understanding. This he could by no means consent to do, and Brother Gray, who was spokesman in the matter, was well aware of the fact from the beginning. It



was simply a representation for the accomplishment of an ulterior purpose, and, as he anticipated, it proved effectual. Brother Dunn, not knowing but this was the general feeling of the Church, asked for a change, which was granted. Mr. Gray then approached the presiding elder and expressed a preference for Brother Spencer. That officer was equally ignorant of the true state of the case, and as Brother Gray was present in behalf of his station, though he did not claim to be officially appointed, his suggestion was treated with respect and his wish finally granted.

The distinguishing feature which qualified Mr. Spencer for his present position, was his ability to live on a small salary. Himself and wife, both in excellent health, constituted his entire family. As a matter of course his expenses were small in comparison with those of the men who had preceded him, and as it was tacitly understood that he would be satisfied with

much less than it had taken to support Mr. Dunn, his appointment was hailed by the advocates of Church economy with special delight.

Brother Benton was glad they were to have a man who did not preach for money, and Father Wells began to exult in the prospect of old times returning, when two shillings a quarter would be all that was demanded. Others were equally elated; but there were many who saw the absurdity of these views, and were shocked at the exhibition of covetousness on the part of these professed disciples of Christ. Thus matters continued until the quarterly conference. When the subject came up, Brother Gray moved to fix the salary at five hundred dollars, and asked the preacher if that would be satisfactory.

"Most certainly," was the reply; "it is enough for anybody."

"So it is," said several of his friends at once.



The proposition was agreed to without discussion, though Brother Vernon ventured the remark that it was much the highest allowance which they had ever made in view of the disciplinary claim of their pastor. He saw, as did others, that what was paraded as a self-sacrificing spirit, was, in fact, its very opposite. Brother Dunn had eight to support, and his allowance was something less than one hundred dollars to each person. Brother Spencer had but two to feed and clothe, and his allowance was two hundred and fifty dollars each. While Brother Dunn could not live on his salary, his successor, whose chief recommendation was that he did not preach for money, could lay up his hundreds per year. And such had been the fact in time past. Brother Spencer had saved quite an amount, while his predecessor had, from his hard-earned receipts, been able to preserve nothing against the infirmities of age, which were already creeping upon him.

The conference year opened rather unpropitiously. Mr. Dunn's friends were dissatisfied with his removal, and the more so when they learned the means by which it had been accomplished. Many of them felt unprepared to enter cordially into the new arrangement, and there was soon an evident falling off in the congregation, and a loss of that unity which alone can give success.

It had been proposed during this year to make some repairs on the meeting-house, which were greatly needed. A hundred dollars had been wrenched out of the former minister for this purpose, but for the want of a leading spirit, and harmonious, united action, the effort was now a failure. A protracted meeting was held, at the instance of Brother Titus, but it was also unsuccessful; the Sunday school greatly decreased for the want of a library, while the benevolent contributions were below any previous year. The fact is, the Church was studying econ-



omy. The great question with Brother Gray and his friends, who were now in the ascendant, was "how cheap can we get along?"

Never before had there been in Berlin such a financial triumph nor such a spiritual defeat. The brethren succeeded in lining their pockets, already full to overflowing; but in the effort they crucified their Lord afresh, and put him to shame even in the house of his friends.

Brother Spencer remained but one year. The society were generally satisfied that their economy was penny wise and pound foolish. Brother Vernon had insisted from the beginning, that any system that went to lessen the offerings of the people would be disastrous. The Gospel, he argued, was not designed to appeal to man's selfishness, but to his benevolence. It teaches men to do for others, to deny themselves, to take up the cross, and follow Christ, who gave

all, as the great exemplar and teacher of mankind. In view of the policy adopted, he was not surprised at the result. The harvest gathered was the legitimate fruit of the seed sown.



## CHAPTER XIII.

SICKNESS AND DEATH OF BROTHER VERNON — HIS CHARACTER  
AND INFLUENCE — THE LOSS.

IN addition to the circumstances already narrated, the Berlin Church was called to suffer an additional loss of no ordinary character. As has been already stated, Brother Vernon was one of the oldest and best members of the station. When a mere lad he had espoused the cause of Christ, and from that day forward had been thoroughly trained in the discharge of the duties and responsibilities of a Christian. Possessed of intelligence, refinement, and some degree of wealth, an honorable position in society was assigned him, where he commanded universal respect. His consistent piety and long-continued devotion to the interests of the Church, gave him a prominence among

his brethren, which, though unsought, constituted him a kind of leader in all their affairs. To him, more than to any other man, the community looked for an exemplification of the various Christian virtues.

Neither did they look in vain. In the house of God his place was seldom vacant. In class and prayer-meetings he bore a consistent testimony to the power and efficacy of the religion of the Gospel. To the various calls of benevolence he never turned a deaf ear. He was emphatically a friend to the poor and a helper of the distressed. The interests of the Church, which are essentially the interests of humanity, found in him a firm supporter and an able advocate.

To the minister, Mr. Vernon was an invaluable assistant. No preacher ever served the Berlin charge that did not find in him a sympathizer and friend. His love to the pastor, as many could testify, was not in word only, but in deed and in truth.



When the itinerant came, a stranger and alone, he invariably extended a cordial welcome. As a parishioner, it was not his custom to wait until the minister called and sought his acquaintance; but he rather met him at the threshold, invited him to his own house, and provided for him and his family until the parsonage could be put in order and household conveniences procured. In short, he was a model Christian, with a warm heart and a liberal hand. To know him was to respect and love him as an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile.

During the session of Conference, Brother Vernon was taken suddenly sick. It was soon rumored that his recovery was doubtful. Notwithstanding all the efforts that could be put forth he sunk rapidly to the tomb. It was soon conceded that the hour of his departure was at hand. As might be expected, death found him fully prepared. With calm assurance and exultant hope he

entered the shadowy vale, and, through faith in Jesus, met and conquered his latest foe. His work was well and faithfully done, and in holy triumph he passed the river of death and took up his abode with angels and redeemed spirits in heaven.

Sad indeed were the hearts of his brethren when the tidings came that Brother Vernon was gone. They felt assured that for him to die was gain; but their loss was of such a character that they knew not how it could be supplied. Upon him more than upon any other man had they relied for counsel and support, and the present condition of the Church was such that his absence was keenly felt.

Still the brethren were not disheartened, and were not disposed to murmur. They knew full well that the Judge of all the earth doeth right; and though stricken, many a heart was nerved anew for the conflict, and many a prayer was breathed that the good man's mantle might fall upon an-



other who should take his place, and like him contend earnestly for the truth as it is in Jesus.

In such seasons how blessed the assurance that God hears and answers prayer. It is a tower of strength, into which the righteous run and are safe.

## CHAPTER XIV.

DISCOURAGEMENTS — GOING ABROAD TO WORSHIP — REV. MR. NELSON — REDUCING THE SALARY ON A NEW PRINCIPLE — A CHEAP GOSPEL — RENTING PEWS SO AS TO MAKE MONEY.

It was now generally conceded that the affairs of our station were not in the most prosperous condition. The membership, as a whole, were quite dispirited by the recent reverses, and a few were inclined to give up the struggle and yield to the unfavorable circumstances with which they were surrounded. Brother Titus and his especial friends, who had been loudest in their professions of attachment to the Church, and most severe in reproving the infirmities and faults of others, were now completely discouraged. They did not purpose to give up religion; far from that; but they saw no



hope for the Church in Berlin. When they engaged in the public services their attention was turned entirely to the desolations of this branch of Zion. They talked and prayed in desponding tones, as if mourning for the dead rather than seeking to promote the prosperity of the living.

More frequently than otherwise they were absent from their post. Such was the lack of interest at home that they usually sought places of worship among the neighboring societies. Sometimes they would go six or eight miles on the Sabbath morning, in order to have a good meeting with the comparative strangers to whom they were thus introduced. By them the only object had in view in attending religious services was to make sure of a "happy time." Present personal enjoyment was the great end for which the cross was to be borne, and it made little difference as to the manner or place in which this end was gained. As to the duty to sustain the Church at home, and

the principle involved, they knew but little and cared less.

By their present course they extended their acquaintance and secured some degree of attention from their new made friends. In a little time they began to look upon themselves as belonging to a class of moral heroes, charged with the fulfillment of an important mission to the Church in general. Even among strangers they had no hesitation in rebuking the improprieties that they discovered, especially if they related to the apparel of a sister or the theology of a minister. In these respects they felt burdened with the care of all the surrounding Churches. They paused at Berlin just often enough to relate their exploits abroad and drop a tear or two over affairs at home, without once suspecting the influence which they themselves exerted toward producing the results which they so constantly deplored.

Fortunately this class of men embraced



but a small portion of the society. The larger and better part of the Church were faithful to the work committed to their hands. Neither were they in doubt as to the final result. They knew in whom they trusted, and dared believe his word. The apostasy, for it was nothing less than that, of those brethren who assumed to represent the religion of the station, tended most of all to the depression of their spirits. Especially were they grieved by the evil report carried abroad by their professed friends, who seemed to forget that no men injure a cause so badly as those who constantly represent it as on the decline. Had it not been for the course of these enthusiasts, there would have been no real cause for discouragement. As it was, the true friends of the Church moved steadily onward in anticipation of final triumph.

When the finances of the station for this year came to be attended to, the same spirit was exhibited as before. Brother Gray was

still looking out for an opportunity to economize, and Brother Benton's effort to guard the purity of the ministry was as earnest as ever.

The preacher, Rev. Mr. Nelson, was a young man of fine sensibilities and retiring manners, and on the questions relating to his own support had nothing to say. He was assured by Brother Gray, in the presence of the Quarterly Conference, that the society was disposed to do all within their power; but since Brother Vernon's death they had found it necessary to curtail expenses, and would be under the disagreeable necessity of cutting down the salary. That good brother had paid from fifty to one hundred dollars a year, and the society's income would be correspondingly reduced. "In this opinion I presume all the brethren will agree with me," said he, looking around with a confident air that seemed to say his word was not to be disputed.

"Certainly," responded Brother Benton.



“And then,” added Brother Titus, “there is Brother Stone, who has moved away. He used to pay fifteen dollars. That will have to be deducted also.”

“Yes,” said Father Wells; “I don’t see but we shall be obliged to come down to three hundred dollars. That would come to, let me see, about two shillings a quarter to each member. We can all pay that just as easy as not.”

“I think we can raise four hundred,” said Brother Gray; “but I will agree to Father Wells’s suggestion, if it is thought best.”

“This is a curious principle indeed,” said Brother Ames. “This Church has suffered the loss of some of its members by death and removal. As a consequence, we lose the money which they were accustomed to pay. Now, instead of bearing the burden, if burden it can be called, we propose to force it all upon our minister. Ought we not rather to divide it among ourselves? It seems to *me* we should put *our* shoulders

to the wheel instead of leaving it entirely to our neighbor."

"But you know," interrupted Brother Benton, with some eagerness, "that we paid all we could before, and it won't do to ride a free horse to death."

"No, that it won't," ejaculated Mr. Titus.

"It wouldn't take many horsemen to ride all the free horses in this Church to death," rejoined Brother Toby, with his usual bluntness.

"When a man does all he can, everybody ought to be satisfied," said Brother Gray.

"We don't do all we can," replied Brother Ames. "The Presbyterian Church in this village has less wealth than we have, and not more than half as many members, yet they pay eight hundred dollars. The Baptists give six hundred, weak as they are, while we talk of doing all we can at three or four hundred. I declare I sometimes feel ashamed of our society."



"I shall not pay any more than I have done," said Brother Gray.

"Very likely ; but it is not because you cannot. The fact is," continued Brother Ames, "you and I ought to give twice as much as we do ; and so with others. And even then we should not pay as much to support the Gospel as do the members of the other Churches in this town. We are getting rich, laying up money every year, and still bent on pinching the preacher to the lowest possible point, for no other reason but that we may add more largely to our gains."

Brother Ames spoke with more earnestness than usual, and perhaps with a little undue severity in his tone ; yet no one ventured to reprove him or say anything in reply. After a moment's pause he went on :

"To some of us it seems the chief recommendation of the Gospel that it is cheap. We can even get it on credit, and pay up when it suits us. All other debts we at-

tempt to meet promptly ; but the debt we owe the Gospel can be left to our leisure, or not paid at all, as convenience may dictate. When we think of salvation without money and without price, we mean simply that our preachers must work for nothing, while we live on the fat of the land. The course we are taking would ruin any Church. I don't expect a revival until we learn to be just toward those who are sent to minister to us in holy things. God will never smile on a people who rob his ambassadors of their just due."

"I don't believe money has anything to do with a revival any way," said Brother Titus.

"Justice has," responded Mr. Ames, "and we can't be honest without a proper use of our money."

The conversation continued some time, and Mr. Ames found himself almost alone in his views of a liberal policy in sustaining the Gospel. At length Brother Bissell



whispered in his ear, assuring him that he was right, but advising him to desist from further discussion. "Brother Gray," said he, "is quite sensitive on this point. He has fixed his mark, and if we go above it we shall give offense and may be drive him from the Church. Now you know," he continued, "we couldn't get along without Brother Gray."

This argument was whispered in the ears of several. The brethren were startled at the bare thought of losing Brother Gray, and, rather than run any risk in that direction, allowed him to have his own way. The allowance was fixed at four hundred, two or three only voting in the negative.

The reader need scarcely be told that the year passed on without any visible improvement. The experiment had been inaugurated, and was now being fairly tested, of carrying on the Church on principles of strictest economy. Every member was to get along by paying just as little as possible,

and was expected to thank God that his burden was no heavier. The cry of poverty was raised by the richest man in the Church, and echoed and re-echoed through all its gradations. In a little time even the members began to think the Church was really poor and unable to do more than they did.

The result was as might have been anticipated. The plan for repairing the meeting-house again proved a failure, and in all respects matters became worse and worse. The congregation grew smaller with almost every returning Sabbath. Members who contributed but little felt but little interest, and the world could not be expected to excel them in making sacrifices for the cause of Christ. The young people mostly attended other churches, where appearances were more inviting and hopeful, and even the children deserted the Sabbath school for others conducted with more liberality and spirit.



The reputation of Berlin Station was not now as it had been in other years. The dilapidated house of worship, the limited collections for missions and other benevolent causes, told unfavorably in the ears of the conference. The preachers who pass from place to place knew that Berlin possessed more means than the average of charges, and, despite the plea of inability, were well aware of the facts of the case. Covetousness was seen to be at the bottom of the difficulty, and until that could be overcome there was no hope of a higher prosperity.

At the commencement of Mr. Nelson's second year it was determined to raise the preacher's salary by a new process. Instead of the usual subscription, the pews were rented, the avails to be applied to this object. This, too, was Mr. Gray's plan. He argued that it would equalize the burdens of the Church, which was very desirable. A committee was accordingly appointed to set a price on each seat, to be regulated by

the advantages of its location. In a small house there was, of course, but little difference, and as none were priced as high as our rich steward usually paid, there was to him just so much clear gain. With Brother Benton the case was otherwise. He was compelled to increase his subscription, though taking one of the lowest priced seats; but it was afterward found that he succeeded in renting single sittings, so as to get one fourth part of his pew for nothing. It was a shrewd business transaction, and the blessings of the Gospel were this year clear gain.

Several others paid more than the price fixed on the highest pews. They saw no reason for lessening their contributions to the cause of God, and had too much religious principle about them to take advantage of these circumstances for their own pecuniary benefit. On the whole it was found that more money was raised in this way than by the old plan; but it was done



by adding to the subscriptions of the poorer classes and diminishing those of the wealthy. This was what Brother Gray called equalizing the burdens of the Church, by bringing each member as near as possible to the same figure.

Though the finances of the station were thus controlled, it was not because there were none who saw and condemned the error. Nine tenths of the Church knew that matters were not conducted as they should be; but it was not easy to apply the remedy.

Brother Ames thought the preacher ought to discuss the subject in the pulpit, with the same plainness of speech that he did other matters; but Mr. Nelson had embraced the common sentiment that it would not do for a minister to look after his own finances, lest he be charged with having selfish ends in view. Thus he allowed giant wrongs to go unrebuked, and kept the pulpit silent while the destroying worm was eating out the

very vitals of the Church. It is not so clear to all minds that a preacher is at liberty to fail in declaring the whole Gospel, for the sake of avoiding reproach and getting the good-will of those who refuse to do their duty.

More than once did Mr. Ames and his friends wish for the return of Brother Dunn, or some other fearless man of God, who would insist upon the right, regardless of consequences. They knew that such a man would be sustained, notwithstanding the cavils of the ruling clique who were now guiding the destinies of the station.



## CHAPTER XV.

CHARITY BEGINNING AT HOME — TAKING BREATH — THE BIBLE AGENT — SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION — THE MISSIONARY COLLECTION — A CENT A WEEK FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD — MR. TITUS — FIFTH COLLECTION — BROTHER QUIGLEY AND HIS TWO SHILLINGS.

DURING this trying period in the history of our station, there was a corresponding diminution of zeal in all the benevolent operations of the Church. It began to be whispered in certain quarters that, as charity should begin at home, and there were so many calls for home interests, these should be attended to and the others left to themselves.

At the quarterly conference, when the appointment of the missionary committee was called for, several brethren could see no occasion for it, as but little, if any-

thing, could be expected from Berlin for such a cause.

"You surely will not press a missionary collection when we are so much embarrassed in our own affairs," said Brother Gray to the pastor.

"It is my duty to take all the regular collections," was the reply.

"I think they ought to be dispensed with this year," continued the rich steward. "Our society ought to have time to take breath before being called on for such things."

"Some of us do nothing but take breath," said Mr. Ames, laughing. "Our collections last year were very small. I confess I was ashamed when I read the report in the conference Minutes."

"Some of us want the *privilege* of giving to a good cause," said Brother Holmes.

"That's all well enough," said Brother Gray, "only we ought to give where it is most needed, and I think that is at home."



“My experience has shown me that those who give abroad are not often deficient in attending to home interests,” said Mr. Oliver.

“Well, well; let those give that can afford to; I can’t do much at present,” answered Mr. Gray.

“Nor I either,” responded Brothers Benton and Titus together.

No large results could be expected under the leadership of such men as these; yet the pastor had no idea of neglecting the requirements of the Discipline in yielding to their wishes. He knew that to allow the spirit of benevolence to die out in the Church was to destroy its only remaining vitality, and totally unfit it for the work at home as well as abroad.

In the course of a few weeks Mr. Nelson announced, at the close of service on the Sabbath morning, that the agent of the American Bible Society would preach in the afternoon, and take up the annual col-

lection for the circulation of the Scriptures. This gentleman, before his appointment to the agency, had often preached in Berlin, and was quite a favorite with the people; but, strange to say, the congregation on the present occasion proved unusually small. Headache and rheumatism (spiritual, it was supposed) kept a considerable number from the house of God. Among them, as might be expected, were the brethren who had said and done so much in favor of Church economy. The very fact that a collection was mentioned awakened the latent disorders that lurked about the nervous system, so that they were unable to leave their rooms.

But the agent was not a novice in his work. He had arranged to spend several days in making calls and soliciting aid from those that were not thus publicly reached. To his personal appeals many gave a favorable response; but others could not be induced to contribute. Brother Gray be-



lieved the Bible Society to be a good institution, and would give if it were not for a single objection. He did not believe in employing and paying agents out of the money thus raised.

“Why don’t the regular pastor take the collection and save this expense?” he inquired. “If I give anything it will be of no use, as so much of it will go to support agents and officers. I have made up my mind not to contribute to any society that adopts this policy.”

This was a happy thought for others as well as Mr. Gray. Brother Benton was fairly elated with the idea. He had decided not to give anything long before; but then it was so much better to have an excuse that would satisfy the conscience and silence all future appeals. To him it was strange that it had never been thought of until now. It was so clear and satisfactory. He had always known there was something wrong, and therefore had never contributed a cent;

but until this time he had possessed no idea of what it was.

Not long after Mr. Nelson took the collection for the Sunday-School Union. Here there was no agent, and no charge of extravagant expenditures could possibly be made. Most of the members responded cheerfully, though not largely, to the call; yet it was seen that the same brethren who had excuses before had them now again. They were equally clear it was not their duty to give to educate and instruct the rising generation abroad, when there were so many indigent and ignorant children in their own village. One might suppose, to hear them talk, that they were the warmest friends of the Sunday-school cause in Berlin, though the walls of the school-room had never yet been darkened by their shadows, and were not likely to be witnesses of their zeal.

Next came the missionary meeting, when the Church was asked to give what it could



toward the conversion of the world. None of the objections heretofore urged were found to bear against this cause, and the claim was generally felt and acknowledged. To the praise of Berlin be it spoken, a liberal subscription was given; but it came almost exclusively from those who had contributed to the other objects. When Brother Gray was first called upon he thought the society too poor to do anything, as there was so much to be done at home; but finally, remembering that there had been a proposition to have the members of the whole Church contribute a cent a week, he concluded he would subscribe, and did so. As to his wife and daughters, they must answer for themselves. He would do his part, and pay down; and with an air of satisfaction he counted out fifty-two cents and handed it to the collector.

As Brother Gray had done his duty, Mr. Benton concluded to do the same. He was not troubled with a wife and daughters in

the calculation, for, fortunately, they had never been converted, and could not be expected to contribute. The examples of these men, and *the great sacrifice they made for the cause of God*, were not sufficient to move their friend and fellow, Brother Titus. He took up his cross in saying prayers and singing hymns, when he was sure to get happy. These worldly matters didn't trouble him in the least, and why should they, for

“His soul was full of glory,  
And inspiring was his tongue.”

This brother had a strange and yet not altogether peculiar idea of the Gospel. He thanked God almost daily that salvation was by faith *only*, and not by anything that man can do. As there was no merit in good works, it was no use to practice them, especially as it had a tendency to lead man to rely on his own efforts rather than upon the unbounded grace of God. To him the yoke of the Gospel was easy and the burden light.



Only take up the cross, which consists in speaking in meeting, and God will take care of the results. No man knew better than he how to rejoice in a *free* salvation, without money and without price. For twenty years that he had been a member of the Church, he had found this sweetest and most glorious promise in the Bible literally true. He loved the Church of his choice better than any other, because it made the way to heaven plainer and cheaper than any other. While his brethren were troubled with questions of mint and anise, of paying the preacher and giving to missions, he had learned to "*pray his way*," straight to glory. The Lord would bring in the heathen when the millennium should come, and it was of no use to hurry matters, as if we could get them converted before that time.

The millennium! Ah, Brother Titus never thought of that without going into raptures. Then nations were to be converted in a day, and all the idols of the heathen thrown

to the moles and the bats. He hoped it would come soon, as he wanted to share in its glories and join in its songs of deliverance. Many a time had he prayed with all his might for the conversion of the world, and why should he not live in hope; for he knew that God always hears and answers prayer.

In church Brother Titus was very devotional. He did not care much for sermons, but the class-meetings and prayer-meetings were his delight. He could sing louder, pray longer, and shout oftener than any other member. In the public congregation his meditations were most profound, especially during the taking of the collection, when he seldom opened his eyes or seemed aware of what was going on. By some it was shrewdly suspected that he did not believe in attending to secular business on Sunday. Others thought it was on the principle of bidding the world stay *yonder* while he went up to worship; in other words,



that his religion related to the future world instead of this. However that may be, no influence was sufficient to induce him to give a cent a week, more or less, toward effecting the conversion of the world.

When the collector made application to Mrs. Gray, that lady coolly referred the matter to her husband, who, she said, usually paid for the whole family. The daughters would give if their father would furnish the money. They had none of their own, and of course were wholly dependent on him. This was known to be very true; but it was equally well understood that they expended large sums for finery and unnecessary apparel, and could, if they had chosen, have saved something for the cause of God. Besides the subscription of Brother Gray, which was already secured, nothing was obtained from this the richest and most prominent family in the Church.

Other families contributed liberally. Several subscriptions of from ten to twenty

dollars were made, and, on the whole, a respectable collection was taken. To such men as Brother Ames and Brother Holmes the cent a week plan seemed perfectly absurd. They could not be content to attempt peopling the world of glory with immortal souls at so cheap a rate. No other work so great, to be accomplished by human agency, would be undertaken with such limited instrumentalities when mightier ones were at hand. By their example much was done toward counteracting the influence of those whose love of the world was so much more prominent than their love of souls.

The other contributions were after the same manner. Even the efforts for the support of the presiding elder met with similar treatment. Many doubts were entertained, just as the stewards started with the plates, as to the propriety of having such an office in the Church, and not until these were settled could anything be given. Brother Titus, who had no sense of shame, usually



attended the quarterly-meeting love-feast, where he was so greatly blessed as to be able to dispense with the other means of grace. He therefore avoided the collection by being away, either at his home or in some other congregation.

The fund for the support of the worn-out preachers was not looked after until near the close of the year. The pastor then preached a sermon on the occasion, in which he showed the propriety of doing something for this class of men. It was an eloquent and earnest appeal, and touched some hearts not usually influenced by the calls of benevolence. Among them was Brother Quigley, a man of means, who had not contributed, to any amount, to any of the previous objects, for reasons such as actuated those who have been already named. This brother, like some other men, made it a rule never to carry his pocket-book to church for fear his heart might be stirred and he be led into financial impru-

dence, and he was therefore unprepared for the occasion. At the close of the service he went to the pastor and remarked that he did not give because he had no money with him. "But," said he, "I will do something. This is an object for which I am willing to contribute. I believe in taking care of these needy old men. It was through their instrumentality that I was converted and brought into the Church. Under God I owe all I have and am to them. I'll hand you my subscription this evening."

"Very well," said Mr. Nelson.

Now, thought the pastor, I shall get a good lift. Brother Quigley, who owes everything to these men, will be liberal, though he cannot even then fully pay the debt.

Evening came, and as Mr. Nelson was going into the church he met his parishioner, who, with a smile, extended his hand, saying: "There is my subscription for the



superannuated preachers. This is a duty I think we should attend to in preference to looking after the heathen and those that we don't know anything about."

Just then he let drop two York shillings into the minister's hand and glided into his pew, prepared for his evening devotions. The pastor gave out the ten hundred and thirty-fourth hymn, which Brother Quigley most heartily joined in singing. The last verse is as follows :

"Whate'er our willing hands can give,  
Lord, at thy feet we lay;  
Grace will the humble gift receive,  
And grace at length repay."

## CHAPTER XVI.

CHANGES IN THE OFFICIAL BOARD — DOING WITHOUT A  
PREACHER — BROTHER BURNS — A CHURCH DOLLAR — REV.  
MR. TOWNLEY — CHURCH REPAIRS.

SEVERAL changes had by this time occurred in the official board. The steward's office, made vacant by the death of Mr. Vernon, was filled by the appointment of Brother Holmes, who will be remembered as the early friend and companion of Mr. Ames. Father Wells, having become satisfied that it was impossible to restore the Church to the position it occupied when he was a boy, tendered his resignation and made room for Mr. Cole, who advocated a policy directly opposite that of his predecessor. Brother Titus also gave up his class, and was succeeded by a Brother James. Other changes were made which it is not necessary to



mention. At times it was thought Brother Gray would also resign, as he was getting pretty much discouraged, and, though having his own way, was far from being satisfied with the result.

This brother began to think there was not strength enough in Berlin to maintain a station, and he sometimes proposed to have the charge left without a preacher for a year or two, until the society could take breath and have a little relief from its manifold burdens. He thought occasional preaching might be secured from members of the conference, and when their services could not be obtained gratis, the society could fall back on the local preachers residing in their midst. Thus the expense would be saved and strength gained so as to enable them to make a vigorous effort at some future time.

With this plan Brother Burns and Brother Ely were very much pleased. The former had always felt that the stationed preacher

was in his way, and that his opportunities for exercising his gifts were so extremely limited as to scarcely make it worth while to hold his license. The latter, as an exhorter, was pretty much of the same opinion. They had both felt afflicted that the pastors did not oftener call them into the pulpit and give them opportunities for magnifying their office.

When Brother Burns went with this proposition to Mr. Oliver, the other local preacher, he found that brother disposed to treat it as one of Brother Gray's jokes. "Why," said he, "we three would ruin this Church in less than a single year. The people don't want to hear us all the time, and we should find it an up-hill business indeed. No, no, Brother Burns; I'll have nothing to do with that arrangement."

"I feel it my duty to preach," was the reply, "and think this would be a favorable opening."

"I feel it a duty to preach also, and there



are places enough round about, without crowding myself where I am not wanted," said Brother Oliver.

"Well, I am not going to be sent out all the time. We ought to have the privilege of preaching here," replied Mr. Burns.

"It's no more a privilege for *me* to preach here than anywhere else; besides, neither Brother Gray nor any one else desires such an arrangement. Like a thousand other things, it is mere talk for talk's sake. Those brethren who think it essential to represent the Church as being very poor, take this way to help make the impression."

Brother Oliver was right, nearer so than even he himself supposed, in these remarks. No one seriously contemplated the arrangement over which Mr. Burns was so elated. It was to help along Brother Gray's favorite theory, and aid in the promotion of his economical principles in the management of Church finances.

The session of conference was again at

hand, and as Brother Gray was anxious to have a preacher with a small family, he was once more in attendance, with his eye, as usual, on the main chance. Had he been willing to devote as much to the support of his minister as he spent in traveling to and from conference, and had his friends done proportionably, there would have been no necessity for a man with a small claim. It is indeed strange, that some men are free in the use of their money for all purposes but those of strict benevolence. They can spend it in traveling, hazard it in business, use it in ornamenting their dwellings and furnishing their parlors, or in a thousand other ways, without any conscientious scruples; but let them be called upon to devote a tithe of as much to the purposes of religion, and they are indignant. A hundred dollars thrown into the bottom of the sea does not appear half as large as a five dollar bill given for the support of the Gospel. A Church dollar is the largest dol-



lar in the world, and to part with it costs far more sacrifice than to give up any other.

In many respects Brother Gray made a liberal use of his money. He would go to conference, put up at a hotel, and spend fifteen dollars in getting a cheap preacher, so that his subscription could be reduced one third of that amount, and think he had made a profitable investment.

The reader may not be able to account for facts of this kind; but if he looks around him he will readily find them in existence.

The preacher sent to Berlin proved to be the Rev. Mr. Townley. He was a wide-awake, earnest man in whatever he engaged, and, though blunt almost to coarseness in his manner, was well adapted to the wants of the station. He was enabled to see at a glance the difficulties to be met, and his plans were immediately formed. The house of worship must be put in order,

and the proposition was made to begin the work without delay. Brother Benton assured him that it could not be done, and Mr. Gray thought they should wait until the society was better off than at present. "If we could only have a revival we should be able to do it," said he.

"We need not expect a revival until we do our duty," was the pastor's response.

"The people are poor," said Mr. Benton, "and if you urge them to subscribe for this object there will be nothing left for you. I always look out for the preacher, and am opposed to the repairs for that reason, if for no other."

"Never mind the preacher now," said Mr. Townley. "One thing at a time. The question is, ought we to do this? If it is our duty, let us go ahead."

"It ought to be done," put in Mr. Titus; "but the Church is very weak. Almost all the members are poor, too poor to expend so much,"



"They are too rich, rather," put in the preacher. "I wish they had not half so much money as they have. They would give more then than they do now. It is not poverty that hurts this station, I can assure you. It is the want of a liberal disposition."

"If we could have a revival first and get in some new members to help, it would come lighter," said Brother Gray.

"Well, I guess, for I am a Yankee, that the Lord will send a revival for that purpose," answered the preacher. "Suppose we pray for one in this wise: 'O Lord, revive thy work; save sinners and bring them into the Church, so that Brother Gray and the rest of us won't have to pay anything for the support of the Gospel.' Do you think we shall get an answer?"

"I fear you will give offense if you talk in that way," said Brother Bissell.

"Never mind, it won't be the first time. Some people ought to be offended."

“But we must be careful of each other’s feelings.”

“Yes, yes, all right,” added Brother Townley, in his half earnest, half jesting tones. “But there is no room for excuses in this matter. That old meeting-house must be put in shape, and if the Church won’t do it we’ll call on the goats, that’s all.”

“Well, I guess he’ll make it go,” said Brother Gray, turning away and walking off. “If he does I shall have to give a hundred, that’s clear. So much out of pocket this year.”

And he did make it go. The money was soon raised and the work begun and prosecuted to completion. By the ingenuity of the preacher a much more thorough work was done than had been originally contemplated. In the end everybody was pleased with the result, and there was a visible improvement in the Berlin Station from that hour.

At the proper time the question of the



preacher's salary came to be considered, when the argument was advanced that but little, even less than before, could be allowed, as so much had been expended in repairs. Brother Holmes contended that this circumstance would only help the matter along, and he was sustained in this view by several others, whose counsels finally prevailed. An allowance was made of eight hundred dollars, double that of last year, and measures devised to secure it. Brother Gray resisted to the last; but in the absence of his old friends and backers his efforts were in vain. Brother Ames and his co-workers were in the ascendancy and carried their point. The new members of the board adopted liberal views, and helped put them into execution.

To raise the money it was proposed to appoint a committee to make an estimate of what each member ought to pay, in proportion to his or her ability. After much discussion and many objections to *the prin-*

*ciple*, on the part of those who knew they did not do their duty, the plan was adopted and the committee appointed. Brother Gray was made chairman, and Brothers Holmes and Cole his associates.

In due time they presented their report, which met with a general acquiescence. Father Wells would not pay his apportionment, and was not expected to; for in money matters he had never been known to do his duty. Brother Benton concluded to withdraw from the Church, and called for his letter; but when he found the preacher ready to dismiss him, took time to reconsider the subject, and nothing more was heard of his leaving. He had evidently expected to carry the point involved in his opposition to the new arrangement by this means, but found himself mistaken.

Mr. Titus said he should leave the society if that course was persisted in. Brother Townley informed him that he could have his letter of dismissal whenever he desired it,



but it was not called for. The truth is, these men had been in the habit of carrying their measures by threats of this kind. But in Mr. Townley they found, to their astonishment, a preacher who seemed willing to let them go, and their old plans were no longer available. They had therefore no other resource but to put their threats into execution or submit to the general arrangements of the Church. Like most other men who threaten, they prudently chose to retreat, and in the future act a more wise and Christian part.

This was the dawning of a new era in the history of Berlin Church. Though Mr. Townley was not as able a preacher as many who had preceded him, there was a visible increase in the congregation, and a general prosperity attending all their interests. The fact is, the people had got along altogether too cheaply. Father Wells's experience, and Brother Gray's philosophy, had led them to think that one chief ex-

cellence of the Church to which they belonged, consisted in the fact that they could get to heaven with a much less outlay of money in this branch of Zion than in any other. Many of them had now come to the conclusion that it was better for the Church to devise liberal things than to be forever studying economy ; that they ought rather to seek ways and means of doing good than thus to hide their light under a bushel. It was a happy discovery, and made just in time to save the station from utter ruin.



## CHAPTER XVII.

UNEXPECTED CHANGE OF PASTORS — SHORT TERMS — THEIR  
INFLUENCE — REV. MR. GOLDEN — CALLING ON THE PREACH-  
ER'S WIFE.

UNFORTUNATELY for the interests of our station, Mr. Townley was not allowed to remain a second year. Some other charge desired his services, perhaps had greater need of them, and he was accordingly removed. The change was entirely unexpected at Berlin, and in not a few minds there was a disposition to complain. This did not arise so much from the fear that a good man would not be sent in his place, as from the fact that the acquaintance which he had formed gave him an immense advantage over a stranger. In many respects he was just getting ready to work in leading souls to Christ. The past year had been successful,

and the Church seemed entering upon a career of more than ordinary prosperity, so that a change of leaders was far from being desirable. No pastor in so short a time could do more than extend his acquaintance to the members of his own congregation; and notwithstanding Mr. Townley's diligence, that large class of irreligious persons who stand most in need of a minister's labors were yet uncared for.

In the present state of society this must ever be the case where the term of ministerial service is so extremely limited. At the beginning of his term the preacher is a stranger to all, and his first effort, in connection with his other labors, is to form the acquaintance of his members. In a large society he is fortunate indeed if this is done in a single year, so as to enable him to understand the personal peculiarities and consequent wants of those whom he is appointed to serve. To remove him then is to take him away before opportunities



for extensive usefulness have been afforded.

The same state of things is found to exist, though to a less extent, at the end of the second year. Very many families, connected with no particular congregation, are never reached and influenced by an itinerant ministry. They may be favorably inclined to our institutions, and ready to be led forward in the way of life; but the pastor does not know them, and in the brief term of two years has no time to find them out. His members are clamoring to be visited, and his immediate congregation must be attended to, and by the time this is done the field is abandoned to another, when a similar process is begun with corresponding results.

This evil was seen and felt by the most intelligent members of the official board, and every year's observation deepened the conviction that the term of ministerial service ought to be extended. The Berlin

Church had lost much and suffered much by these frequent changes. Every new minister inaugurated a new and distinct administration, and in all their plans nothing could be looked upon as permanently established. At one time the pastor, in whom all had confidence, proposed a scheme which, upon his recommendation and urgent request, would be adopted as the basis of action. Watched over and guarded by its originator, it was almost sure to succeed so long as he continued in charge. By the time it was fairly established, and before it could become identified with the permanent interests of the station, a change of ministers would introduce a change of measures. The new comer had been accustomed to a different mode of doing the same things, and under his guidance another experiment would be undertaken. A year or two, and a similar scene was re-enacted, to the loss of all permanence and the disparagement of the whole work.



If for any reason the plan thus proposed by the preacher was rejected, there followed a still greater evil—the want of harmonious action between the pastor and his people. Then almost any plan would be a failure. In the minds of many who had watched the history of the station, the itinerancy brought no advantages to counterbalance these losses. They could readily see its peculiar adaptation to new and sparsely-settled communities, which have ever been the field of its most glorious triumphs. No one at Berlin desired its abolition, but nearly all asked for a change, to give it more success in the older stations. The preachers also shared the same feeling, with the exception of those who eschew all change, and seek to stereotype forms and customs as they existed in their early days; and a few, to their shame be it spoken, who feared that a longer term would give the best appointments to their superiors and leave themselves to the smaller and less im-

portant charges. That the change would be made in the course of a few years, was the opinion of nearly all who were familiar with the disadvantages referred to.

In the place of Mr. Townley came the Rev. Mr. Golden, who, though wholly unacquainted with the Berlin Society, was duly received and recognized as the regular pastor. Some of the members, however, treated him rather coolly, not because of objections to him, but of attachment to his predecessor. They saw no good reason for Brother Townley's removal, and though having no occasion to charge it upon Mr. Golden, he was obliged, in part at least, to bear the consequences.

"Have you called on the new preacher?" asked Mrs. Bissell of several of the sisters as they met at the sewing circle.

"I have not," answered Mrs. Ames. "I am half inclined not to form an intimate acquaintance with him or his family. If I do they will move away just as I become



attached to them, and I shall suffer in my feelings more than I shall gain."

"So I've been thinking," said Sister Toby. "I have become discouraged calling on the preachers. I have not been to see Sister Golden yet, and don't know as I shall."

"I can't learn that any one has visited her except myself," said Mrs. Holmes. "I have been to the parsonage two or three times, and I think Mrs. Golden feels neglected that the members do not visit her."

"Some preachers' wives are always complaining if everybody don't run after them as soon as they get here," said Mrs. Quigley. "I shall not go to see her till she calls on me."

"But you ought to call first," exclaimed several voices.

"No, no," replied Sister Quigley; "not on a *minister's* wife. It is her *duty* to call on everybody."

"I am glad then that I am not a minister's wife," said Sister Ames, "for I am pretty sure I shouldn't do my duty."

"I think all should call on Sister Golden and make her feel at home," added Mrs. Holmes. "She is a stranger here, and must be lonely unless we welcome her."

"It won't make much difference," put in Mrs. Quigley; "she'll be away in a year or two, and her society is not of much account just for that time."

"Ours may be of some consequence to her," replied Sister Holmes. "Though she stays but a year or two in a place, she spends a lifetime somewhere; and if each Church should do by her as we propose, it would deprive her of society altogether."

"I will make her a call the first opportunity I have," said Sister Ames. "I ought to have gone before this."

"She is an excellent woman," said Sister Holmes, "and we shall enjoy her acquaintance very much. I invited her to the sew-



ing circle, but she was so much of a stranger she declined coming."

"She should have come all the more, so as to get acquainted," said Mrs. Quigley.

"Perhaps she does not want to get acquainted enough to run after people," replied Mrs. Ames. "I wouldn't have come if I had been in her place, so long as none of us had been to see her."

"But you are not a minister's wife."

"I don't see as that makes any difference. Minister's wives are entitled to respectful treatment as well as other people."

In this conclusion the ladies generally agreed. Mrs. Quigley did not find many at Berlin who believed with her that it was the duty of a preacher's wife to come on to the charge, and go out making pastoral visits. The people were too well informed to be led into such views. They knew that a minister's wife occupied no different position in society than that of any other Christian lady, and were disposed to treat

her with no less respect. The feelings which found expression at the sewing society resulted from no want of sympathy with the preacher or his wife, who, so far as they were known, were already highly esteemed. They very naturally sprung from the circumstances under which the ladies were placed. Like all other persons who act on intelligent principles, they desired associations that might be permanent, and sought friendships that gave promise of endurance; but in so doing forgot to consider what must be the solitude of the itinerant preacher's wife, if all the ladies of the Church acted on that purely self-regarding principle.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

PASTORAL VISITING — BROTHER BENTON — SISTER QUIGLEY  
— A GREAT REVIVAL AND ITS FRUITS — REMOVAL OF THE  
PASTOR.

MR. GOLDEN's first term was not marked with any very auspicious results. For a little time after his coming the congregation sensibly diminished, and the various interests of the Church seemed to be on the decline; but as he became better acquainted the embarrassments were overcome, and the difficulties surrounding him as a stranger fully surmounted.

It was soon admitted on all hands that he was one of the best preachers with which the station had been favored. Able in his exposition of the Scriptures, earnest in his efforts to benefit his hearers, and eloquent in his manner of address, his

preaching was almost universally commended.

Against him one only objection was urged: he was charged with being deficient in pastoral visiting. The opinion prevailed here, as in many other places, that this was the most important work of a Gospel minister. Many of the people cared less for the pulpit exercises, and for the proper discharge of his duties as a preacher, than they did for his social habits. They wanted to see him at their homes and hear him chat about their farms and merchandise; and when it was found that Mr. Golden spent a great proportion of his time in his study, there was no little complaint. A few felt slighted in not seeing him as often as they wished; and taking offense that he neglected making their views his rule of duty, they resolved to absent themselves from the house of God, and thereby be revenged; hoping also in the end to bring the pastor to their terms.



This was the case with Brother Benton, who was now fast becoming a garrulous old man, distinguished more for being a croaker than a Christian. So far as he was personally concerned, he professed to have no care whether Brother Golden visited him or not; but he had a pungent feeling for others who were aggrieved by the neglect. He accordingly remained at home on two or three successive Sabbaths, taking care to have it well understood that he intended it as a rebuke to the preacher. After he had fully satisfied himself that it had reached Mr. Golden's ear, he felt considerably surprised and more than ever afflicted that that personage said nothing, and seemed to care nothing for the result. He was now fully resolved to bring the minister to terms, and continued the experiment, but with no better success. Brother Golden saw the spirit exhibited, and knew that nothing would be gained by catering to the old gentleman's whims.

A similar experiment was tried by Sister Quigley. The cause of her complaint existed in the fact that Mrs. Golden had twice called on Sister Holmes and had not come to see her. The next Sunday bore testimony to the lady's indignation by revealing her absence from the house of worship. The preacher and his wife were informed of the peculiarities of the case, and urged to set it all right by making her a call. It was suggested by the friends that Sister Quigley was a little peculiar in her notions and very set in her way, and the minister would be obliged to pay her especial attention, or there was danger of her leaving the Church. She had several times been on the point of withdrawing, and had once or twice even asked for her letter; but as her demands were met before the dismissal was consummated, she had been retained. Those who knew her best had no doubt but the same process would again secure the same result.



Under these circumstances it became a question with Mr. Golden, whether or not it would prove a benefit to such persons to encourage them in this course by yielding to their terms. Their spirit was evidently unchristian and unreasonable, and there was room for a doubt as to what should be done. He finally decided to treat them as he did all others, making no reference to the circumstances referred to. Mrs. Golden had always constituted it a rule to return such calls as she received, so far as her time would permit; but as Sister Quigley had not been to see her she felt justified in her present course.

Besides, few persons feel inclined to visit an individual who has set up some standard, and has a battery of fault-finding and abuse loaded, to be discharged the moment they make their appearance. Sister Golden was an entire stranger to Mrs. Quigley, and would have been extremely embarrassed to make her acquaintance under such cir-

cumstances. She therefore wisely stayed away.

Notwithstanding these complaints, Mr. Golden was not entirely lacking in his qualities as a visitor. As opportunity presented, he called on his members and the people generally, as far as he was able, making this, however, a secondary feature of his work. After a little time the people ceased to expect more, and, except on the part of the few who make fault-finding a profession, a general satisfaction prevailed.

Early in the second year of his incumbency there were unusual evidences of the Divine presence. Several sought and obtained peace in believing, and others were known to be inquiring the way to life eternal. During the months of autumn and winter the interest continued to increase, until it was found necessary to multiply the services of the Church, so that almost every evening was devoted to Divine service. One after another who had rejected the proffers



of grace for many years, now yielded to be saved by the power of faith, and the influence of the revival became widely extended. Scores, and at length hundreds, were happily converted to God. The old and the young, the high and the low, moved by a common desire, flocked to the standard of the cross, and were made partakers of spiritual life.

To the Berlin Station this was a time of great rejoicing. Parents who had yearned over their children, wives and husbands who had plead in prayer for their unconverted companions, and friends who had long invoked the blessings of heaven upon their neighbors, now exulted in the fulfillment of God's promises in hearing and answering their manifold petitions. To all it was evident that God was in the assembly of the saints, and that he did not visit his people in vain.

Under the influence of this revival great results were manifest. Mr. Evans, the law-

yer, had turned from his briefs to the altars of devotion, and the prediction was already current that he would give his life to the ministry. Mr. Parsons, the keeper of the principal hotel, had poured the liquid fire from his decanters, and the evening and the morning witnessed a gathering of his household around the domestic altar. The careless and the indifferent were become zealous advocates of the religion of the Gospel, and many of them gave indisputable evidence that they had passed from death unto life.

As the fruit of this revival a very large number were gathered into the Church, and our station was now in a more prosperous condition than at any former period of its history. Conversions continued frequent to the close of the conference year, when Brother Golden's term expired, and he was removed to another charge. He was followed by Mr. Nevins, a good preacher, but, under the circumstances, wholly unable to



supply his predecessor's place. Indeed no stranger could come in and take the oversight of a class of young converts like this, and be to them like the one who led them to Christ. Most of them felt for the time being like sheep without a shepherd, and before the new pastor could form their acquaintance a considerable number were gathered into other folds. The settled pastors of the village were anxious to enlarge their own Churches, and taking advantage of the change which our itinerancy so imperiously demanded, did so to our disadvantage. As on several other occasions, much of the strength of the revival was diverted from its legitimate place, and not a little of it entirely lost.

Still the revival was the occasion of great rejoicing. Much fruit was gathered that, it was believed, would remain unto eternal life. A new impulse was given to the affairs of the Church, and its members were greatly encouraged. The influence was ap-

parent in all departments of the work. The benevolent collections were larger than ever before, and in things spiritual and temporal the station was in the enjoyment of goodly prosperity.



## CHAPTER XIX.

RESULTS OF THE REVIVAL — REVIEW — ATTAINMENTS —  
CONCLUSION.

Nothing of especial interest has occurred in the history of Berlin Station for several years. The preachers that have come in rapid succession and stayed their appointed seasons, have been good and faithful men, and, with but few exceptions, have given general satisfaction. Revivals, more or less powerful, have prevailed from time to time, and notwithstanding the losses that have occurred from death and removal to other localities, its membership is in the enjoyment of a steady increase. The station occupies an honorable position in the conference, being classed among the very best, and it is by no means unworthy of its reputation.

The reader, who has perused the foregoing pages, may be interested in knowing something further of the men to whom reference has been made. On this point a few words must suffice. Brother Ames is, in all respects, the leading man of the station. His enlarged views have been adopted by his co-laborers and carried to their practical results. It is no longer considered the chief business of a steward to study Church economy, and curtail the offerings of the people for fear of making them poor. Under his guidance the charge has risen to its present attitude. While free to give to every good cause, and sometimes paying out more than his brethren thought prudent, he has enjoyed great financial success. In business he has been prospered above his neighbors, and though scattering abroad with a liberal hand, he has also gathered in abundance. Unlike most others, he did not simply resolve to be benevolent when he became rich. He has been a liberal supporter of



the Church from the beginning, increasing in his contributions as he increased in wealth. Having thus disciplined himself, he is not likely to become weary in well-doing, but rather to be always abounding in the work of the Lord.

His spiritual advancement has been correspondingly rapid. Few men enjoy more abiding peace in our Lord Jesus Christ than he. The means of grace are his delight, and they are not neglected. In short he is a model man and a model Christian, loved and respected by all who know him.

Brother Gray is still living, but takes no active part in the affairs of the Church. His penuriousness has increased with his age, and though it is evident to all that he is on the borders of the spirit-world, he is more than ever attached to the things of earth. His treasured gold is held with a tenacity almost unaccountable, and he clings to his possessions as though he were to enjoy them forever. Though still professing

to be a well-wisher to the Church, he cannot be induced to contribute of his means to promote her interests. When called upon he invariably refers to the past, assuming that he has done his part, and that younger men must now do the work and bear the burdens of the Gospel.

Brother Gray, in fact, is a superannuated Christian. Though possessing means with which he might bless the Church and send a thrill of joy even to heathen lands, he has retired from the contest, leaving his silver and gold to rust and canker, as it is withheld from his Master's service. He is no longer "a soldier of the cross," but rather a looker on, while the battle is being fought by other and braver men.

His spiritual condition is as might be expected. A thousand evils in Church and state present themselves, and over them he constantly broods. In all things around him he sees nothing but what is shrouded in darkness. The age is degenerate beyond



hope of recovery. The Church has departed from its first love, and Christians have lost their vitality and power with God. Even the children are wickeder than were the children in his day. Thus he reasons and finds no relief. His brethren shun his presence, and the minister finds it a cross to visit his household and be compelled to listen to his complaints. To all who know him he is an object of pity, and yet he has few sympathizers, and still fewer confidential friends. His case is not unfrequently referred to as an example and a warning to those who are inclined to follow his steps, and, like him, become wedded to the world while professing the religion of Christ.

Brothers Titus and Benton are out of the Church, the one expelled and the other withdrawn. Sister Quigley has also left; the three together having embraced the doctrines of modern spiritualism. Here we leave them, with but little hope that they will be recovered from their apostasy and

restored to the truth as it is revealed in the sacred Scriptures.

Mr. Oliver is yet faithfully laboring in his department as a local preacher. Here he has long done good service, and he is not now without the respect and esteem of his brethren. His fellow, Brother Burns, has gone to a sect bearing an honorable and high-sounding name, where he could more easily obtain the honors of an ordained minister. He has his appointments every Sabbath, and is hailed by his new friends as a burning and shining light.

Most of the others to whom the reader has been introduced are in their places, as faithful and devoted disciples of Christ. Some have passed away, triumphing over death through faith in Jesus, and have doubtless entered into rest. Others are ready to depart and be with Christ, and are calmly waiting to hear it said, "It is enough; come up higher."

THE END.



The Itinerant Minister—His Family and People.

---

## LIFE IN THE ITINERANCY,

A STORY EXHIBITING THE VARIED EXPERIENCE OF A

Methodist Minister and his Family

FROM ORDINATION TO SUPERANNUATION.

DEDICATED TO THE WIVES OF METHODIST MINISTERS, WHO SHARE,  
EQUALLY WITH THEIR HUSBANDS, THE TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS  
OF THE ITINERANT MINISTRY,

BY ONE

“Who, long devoted to its toils and cares,  
Enjoys its triumphs, its reverses shares.”

In one Volume, 335 pp. 12mo. Price, \$1 00.

---

PUBLISHED BY CARLTON & PORTER,  
200 Mulberry-street, New-York.

---

The above work cannot fail to interest, instruct, and delight readers of all classes, for it is one of the most genial and interesting of stories, told in a very pleasant manner. It will, however, possess deep and especial attraction for that large and respectable body of Christians of whose itinerant ministry, in their toils, their trials, and their triumphs, it gives such graphic and life-like portraiture.

---

### WHAT REVIEWERS SAY OF IT.

“That is a work which should be read by every minister and every member in the Methodist Episcopal Church,” said one of the most devoted, accomplished, and intelligent ladies of our communion, as she finished the reading of *Life in the Itinerancy*. This sentiment, in substance, has been expressed by all whom we have heard speak of its merits. It is deservedly popular with persons of every age.—*Northern Independent*.



## LIFE IN THE ITINERANCY.

---

It is well written. The composition and structure of the book, as a whole, exhibit traits of decided artistic excellence. It is neither one side nor the other, like "Sunny Side" and "Shady Side," but takes a middle path, combining in due proportions sun and shade. Its effect will be salutary. Many a useful truth is taught here, that without offense would not perhaps be listened to in any other form. The manner beguiles attention, and the instruction once gained, will be as beneficial, probably, as if acquired in a more formal manner.—*Northern Independent*.

The ups and downs, the trials and conquests, the poverty, pinchings, and unexpected providences of a Methodist preacher's history, are here given with an accuracy which will be identified, in many cases, as true to the life.—*Methodist Protestant*.

The subject, as well as the masterly manner in which it is treated, at once takes hold, and retains the reader's attention, and also excites in him the deepest interest. All that passes in a minister's family, together with the innumerable incidents consequent upon a life of change such as is the lot of a laborer in the vineyard of the Lord, especially one of the Methodist connection, are faithfully recorded.—*Phila. Daily Times*.

This work is designed to illustrate the life, labors, trials and triumphs of a Methodist minister and his family. It is written in a popular style, calculated to please. Its author was doubtless "experienced" in the things of which he wrote; for he has daguerreotyped the various characters and incidents so perfectly that we are made to feel that we are living over the last twenty-four years of our life.—*Wesleyan*.

This work reveals the very animus of our ministerial system. All sorts of vicissitudes and Church characters pass over the scene.—*Zion's Herald*.



## LIFE IN THE ITINERANCY.

---

It is vividly and truthfully drawn, and though the characters are fictitious, the incidents are but too real. A summary of the heads of the principal chapters will show the character of the work: "Call to the Ministry. The Conference. The First Sabbath. Emily Porter. The New Bride. The Sewing Society. Housekeeping. Visiting. The First Removal. The New Station. Old Mrs. Blakie. Mistaken Zeal. Making Calls. The Donation Visit. Economy. The Revival. Another Removal. Calls at the Parsonage. The Quarterly Conference. Out of Debt. The Superannuated Preacher. Books and Study. Hard Times. The Pastor's Family. City Stations. Calls for Money. The District Appointments. The Children. The Last Appointment. Superannuation."—*Evening Journal*.

This book gives a clear, comprehensive, inside view of the workings of the Methodist itinerancy. It is full of truth, and written in a racy, fascinating style; and highly illustrated, not with wood or steel engravings, but with finely executed and striking pen-portraits and scenic representations. Its author is a *live Methodist preacher*, and the book is well calculated to be useful to members of the Church.—*Northern Christian Advocate*.

A telling picture of the "sunny side" and "shady side" of the Methodist preacher's life and labors. The book will be welcome in the homes of the worn-out preachers, to aid them in "fighting their battles o'er again," as well as by the earnest young men who are just entering upon their arduous work.—*Weekly Visitor*.

Few of the many volumes which have recently been devoted to the delineation of life in the pastorate, reveal so fully the nature of the trials which arise from the inadequacy of clerical support, and the inconsiderateness and cruelty of officious spirits among the people.—*Harper's Magazine*.

## LIFE IN THE ITINERANCY.

---

We know not the author of this volume; but the production is painfully true to life. The experiences narrated are no fictions. A more self-denying and self-sacrificing class of men than Methodist ministers does not exist. The painful changes of social relations, and the constant crossing of all local attachments, are often aggravated by the life-long pressure of present poverty and prospective want. Under these circumstances it requires strong faith in God to enable one to toil on to the end; but the large portion of the company have been enabled to do this, and triumph at last. This volume is not only deeply interesting, but its wide circulation in the Methodist denomination would not fail to do good.—*Ladies' Repository*.

The Itinerancy as it is—not its sunny side nor its shady side specially—is the subject pictured in this volume. It is elementarily fact; the grouping and the drapery alone are furnished from the writer's conception. He has been considered as one of the most successful essayists in this new literature. Those who commence his narrative are apt, like his hero, to persevere steadfastly to the end. If truth in an imaginative garb be allowedly contemplated, it can be nowhere more innocently studied, perhaps, than in these pages.—*Methodist Quarterly Review*.

Some of the scenes are exceedingly life-like, and the whole story is creditable to the tact and chastened imagination of the author.—*National Magazine*.













Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing Agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date:

AUG

1996



**BOOKKEEPER**

PRESERVATION TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

111 Thomson Park Drive  
Cranberry Twp., PA 16066



HECKMAN  
BINDERY INC.



SEP 92

N. MANCHESTER,  
INDIANA 46962

